THE TOY MAKERS

CHARLES FELTON PIDGIN

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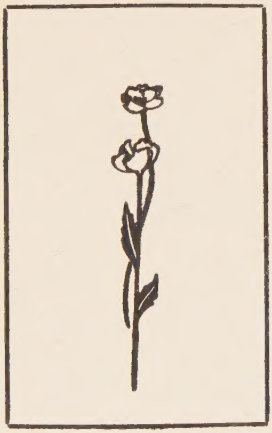
The

TOYMAKERS



SHOULDER ARMS!

THE TOYMAKERS

BY

CHARLES FELTON PIDGIN

AUTHOR OF

QUINCY ADAMS SAWYER
BLENNERHASSETT, Etc.

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THE TOYMAKERS

CHAPTER I

THE LITTLE RED MILL

MIDDLETON-ON-QUICK is in the heart of England. By that is not meant the geographical centre—it is not a question of latitude and longitude. Nor the centre of population—for big London would then be the heart, and head, and lungs of the nation. No, it is where the soil is the most fertile, the sky the bluest, where the sun shines brightest, and the birds sing sweetest—where men are noble, and women true—there is the heart of England, and Middleton-on-Quick was not far from it.

There is no wish to mystify the reader. Middleton was the name of the village, and Quick that of the river on which it was situated. At

its origin, the Quick belied its name, for it was very slow, being, at first, only a little brook way up in the Dunmoor Hills. It ran merrily down until it met another little brook; they were married and kept on their way rejoicing. Then came sons and daughters, and aunts and uncles, and many cousins; so by the time it reached Middleton it was a full-grown river, conscious of its strength which was not used for any good purpose until Malachi Stubbs built the little red mill, and utilized the whizzing, whirling wheel to supply him with power—and for what? To make horses and camels, dogs and goats, cats and cows, elephants and tigers—all to become inhabitants of the Noah's Arks that were sent to London, and all over England, to delight the children of both rich and poor.

It was the day before Christmas—the year was long ago, so which particular one it was does not matter. Dr. Bunch had been to Dunmoor to buy some needed medicines, and some gifts, to be credited to the generosity of Santa Claus, for the little Bunches, of whom there were six—the eldest twelve.

The main road in Middleton ran almost parallel with the river, and Dr. Bunch scanned the frozen Quick, expecting every moment to see his son and namesake, Benjamin, glide by upon his skates. His eye-quest was futile, and he turned his attention to his old horse Peter, who belonged to the stop-ever breed. He did not wait until he reached the foot of a hill—the sight of one in the distance was sufficient to give him a partial paralysis. The Middleton boys said that the Doctor pushed with the reins, and that if the Doctor's gig had been put before old Peter, so many patients would not have died before he got there. But this was only village raillery.

"Hallo!" cried the Doctor, as an old, doubled-up specimen of humanity came in sight in a cross-road. "How's your rheumatiz?"

"Nor better, nor worse," answered the old man. "If I eat brown bread and drank cold water, it would do me as much good as your drugs, and cost less."

"No doubt of it, Mr. Eales," said the jolly Doctor, "but as you prefer to eat roast pork and drink hard cider, you'll have to pay the price."

"No, I won't nuther," said Mr. Eales. "Send in your bill and don't come any more; if you do, I won't pay you."

"Nor will I ask you to," said Dr. Bunch. "But I must get home, so Merry Christmas, for I may not see you on the morrow."

"One day's as good as another, and no one of 'em better," was the old man's reply, as he dug his pointed cane in the snow and walked on.

"Get up, Pete," the Doctor cried sharply, giving the horse a cut with the whip, which unexpected attention so startled the beast that he gave a jump which nearly threw the Doctor backwards into the road.

A little woman clad in sombre gray was just entering a little shop, the windows of which were filled with those wonderful creations of straw, and feathers, and ribbons, and so much else called women's bonnets and hats, when the Doctor's gig came in sight. Old Pete was pulled up with a jerk that gave him the toothache.

"Good afternoon, Miss Dunn Moore, and may you have a beautiful Christmas."

"Thank you, Doctor," said the little woman,

"and so may you is my wish. You are good to the poor, and may the Lord be good to you."

"I'm sure to profit by the holiday," said the Doctor, laughing. "I never saw a Christmas that did not put pounds in my pocket."

"And pains in your patients," added Miss Dunn Moore.

How she hated her name! She could not change it in the church books, and no man had offered her his. Perhaps if Dr. Bunch—but to think of that was foolish—yes, sinful. But she was sure her right name was Dunmoor, and that she was the rightful owner of nearly the whole town.

A stout woman—"fat, fair, and forty"—stood at the window of the only dressmaking establishment in Middleton. She saw the Doctor and came to the door.

"Merry Christmas to you, Doctor Bunch!"

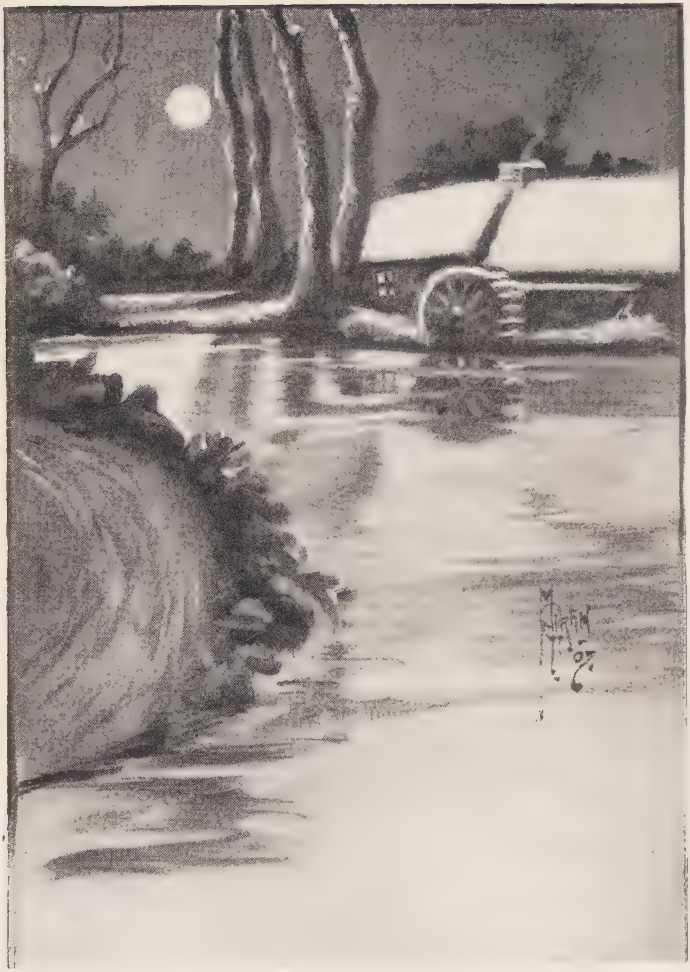
"And to you, good Mistress Merrily. Years may add to your age, but you look younger than ever."

"Oh, lawks, Doctor, how you flatter!"

The Doctor placed his hand upon his heart, and Old Pete, thinking the flirtation had gone on long enough, and being a strictly moral quadruped, started forward of his own accord, unmindful of the fact that the Doctor stood up in the gig, raised his hat, and made a profound bow, for which the widow repaid him with a graceful courtesy.

The Doctor was nearing the little red mill—but this side of it stood a little cottage, which in summer was covered with vines and runners and creepers, while all the old-fashioned flowers our grandmothers loved made it an earthly paradise for butterflies, and humming birds, and bees.

In it lived Mr. and Mrs. Larkin and Daisy, their only grandchild. Had not Doctor Bunch heard her first infant cry, and had he not sat by her bedside many times when Death's wings seemed to throw a shadow on her pale face? Could he enjoy his Christmas unless some of the gifts beneath the gig's seat were left to gladden her—eighteen—but still a child in face and innocence of thought?



The little red mill.

"I'm sorry, Doctor, but Daisy is not at home. She has gone to the mill. The toymakers have a holiday to-morrow, and they are all going to the masquerade at Dunmoor Barracks—Captain Sabreton has invited them all. Are you going to the mill?"

The Doctor shook his head; not wisely, as a Doctor should, but in a disappointed, dissatisfied way. "Give her this, with my blessing and best wishes for her health and happiness."

He gave old Pete a vicious cut; this time the Doctor was astonished, for Old Pete stood upon his hind legs, lost his balance—for he was not an athletic animal, having neglected practising—fell upon the right shaft and snapped it off.

"Now you will have to go to the mill and get Tom and Johnnie to help you," cried Mrs. Larkin, and the Doctor said to himself, softly: "The man of wrath is sure of his reward."

The sun sank low in the West, painting the clouds with those wonderful colors that make the painter despair. The door of the little red mill was open, and sounds of youthful laugh-

ter came from within. In a few hours the village youth would sing carols, and the bells would, in their way, sing "on earth peace, good will toward men."

CHAPTER II

WHAT WAS IN IT?

Old Pete remained in the position in which he originally fell. To the Doctor's entreaties, and even to his actions which savored of forcible persuasion, he turned a deaf ear. His master felt that he must have assistance, and so he made his way quickly to the little red mill. As he approached it, the door was thrown back, and two young men came out, their exit being followed by peal after peal of girlish laughter.

One of the young men was tall—fully six feet in height—with large red hands, red cheeks, and red hair. Behind him came a little roly-poly sort of a fellow, not more than four and a half feet in height, with a big moon face, his large mouth drawn into what appeared to be a never-ending grin.

The tall young man was Thomas Bright, a

nephew of Mr. John Stubbs. The fat little fellow was John Stubbs's son and only child, Johnnie.

"What's the matter, Doctor?" asked Tom. "Horse run away?"

"Never saw you walking before," added Johnnie.

The Doctor gave a brief description of the accident and the predicament in which he was placed.

"Oh, that's easy," said Johnnie. "All you want is two pieces of iron with holes bored in them, and put them on the broken shaft and screw them down tight and it'll be just as good as new. I saw one over to Dunmoor Barracks fixed that way."

"Much obliged to you, Johnnie," said the Doctor. "The only trouble is we have not got the pieces of iron and the screws."

"Well, we can get the next best thing to it, Doctor," cried Tom. "I can get two pieces of wood and some strong cord, and we can put what we call a splint on it, same as we did when Daisy Dane's pet chicken broke its leg."

"That is what I was going to suggest," said the Doctor; "but have you got the pieces of wood and the cord?"

"Oh, yes," said Tom, "I can get them in a minute," and he ran into the mill.

"We might as well walk down," said the Doctor. "Perhaps Old Pete will get up and run away."

"Run away!" laughed Johnnie. "If he ran it would be the first time."

They found Old Pete reposing quietly. The combined exertions of the three were necessary to induce him to resume a perpendicular position and allow him to be detached from the gig, so that the repairs on the shaft could be completed.

"Won't you stop at the mill, Doctor?" asked Johnnie. "To-morrow is a holiday, you know, and the girls are having a frolic. Daisy Dane is there."

The Doctor wished to accept the invitation. He wanted to speak with Daisy—to wish her a Merry Christmas, and look into her pretty face, and hear her sweet voice, but he could not make

up his mind to do this with a lot of chattering, giggling girls hearing every word and watching every movement.

"I really cannot stop, Johnnie. I ought to be at home now. I called at Mrs. Larkin's and left word for Daisy, so if you will just tell her that I did so, I think I shall move on."

The Doctor had named his house "Quick Hall." As he sent his bills to his patients once a month, Mr. Eales said that he ought to change its name to "Quick Haul," but when he repeated his first and only joke to Lord Middleton, that gentleman replied that Dr. Bunch's action was all right, for he had six hungry mouths to feed, while the late Dr. Springer was a bachelor, and besides, he had a government pension which was sufficient to support him.

The boys went back to the mill while the Doctor drove towards his home, which was half a mile distant. He had not proceeded far when he saw a man leaning up against a hedge, an expression of acute pain upon his face.

"Matthew Quinn! Why, what's the matter?"

Mr. Quinn was the village constable. Years ago, in attempting to arrest a young scapegrace, who had climbed to the top of a shed, Mr. Quinn had lost his balance, had fallen to the ground, and broken his leg. The accident left him with a marked limp in his gait and the irreverent youth of the village who formerly called him "Mr. Quinn," when he could run even faster than they could, now called him "Hobble Quinn," because they had no difficulty in eluding him.

"Well, the fact is, Doctor," said Mr. Quinn, "them boys have been up to it again. They pelted me with snowballs and I ran after them down Apple Lane; but the young miscreants had tied a cord across the lane between two trees and I got a tumble and I'm afraid I've broken my kneepan. Every time I step it cuts through me like a knife."

"Well, come, get in here," said the good-natured Doctor, "and I will take you to your home, and as soon as I've told my wife that I'm safe and sound, I'll run down and take a look at you."

It was with considerable difficulty that the ponderous Mr. Quinn was assisted into the gig. They had not proceeded far before they met a natty dogcart, in which sat a gentleman of a decided military appearance. Both drivers drew up their horses, and the military gentleman made a salute.

"Ah, Doctor, glad to see you."

"Same to you, Captain Sabreton. Why so far away from your command?"

"Well, the fact is that Squire Coldfish agreed to act as one of the patrons and his wife as one of the patronesses at our masquerade to-night. This afternoon I got word that they would be unable to be present, and I came over to learn the cause of their declination which I was afraid proceeded from something serious."

"If either of them was sick, I should have heard of it," said the Doctor.

"Oh, it's not a physical trouble, but it seems that the Squire's wife spoke to the rector, and although he has no objection to an ordinary party, he draws the line at masquerades, so the good lady's moral principles will not allow her

to be present, and, of course, her moral principles will not allow her husband to be present. Of course, at such a gathering, it is necessary that we should have chaperons. I wish you and your wife could come, Doctor."

The Doctor shook his head. "Ah, impossible, Captain. There is no day in the year in which there is so much overeating as on Christmas. My services are in great demand, and I should be unjust to my regular patrons if I deserted them simply for personal gratification."

"Well," said the captain, "I have one more call to make. I sent an invitation to all the young girls at the mill to come to the masquerade, but when I gave it, I did not know that Miss Dane was not employed there, so I am going to give her a special invitation."

The Doctor did not vouchsafe any particular answer to the Captain's remark. With a "Good day; Merry Christmas," he drove on at a slow pace, while the Captain's high-bred stallion, impatient of restraint, dashed forward at a full gallop.

Inside the little red mill jollity reigned su-

preme. Christmas eve was but a few hours away and there was to be a masquerade ball at Dunmoor Barracks, some three miles from Middleton. All the young girls who worked for Mr. Stubbs had been invited, and there were nine of them. They had all been born and had grown up in Middleton, with the exception of one. Nellie Clavering, a petite little creature, with wavy brown hair and blue eyes, was a native of Dunmoor. It was her acquaintance with Captain Sabreton of the 44th Hussars, who were located at Dunmoor Barracks, that had led to the invitation being extended to the toymakers to attend the masquerade.

Little Miss Clavering, after beginning work in the toy-shop, had come to live in Middleton, with her intimate friend Miss Lillian Bickerstaffe, who was tall, dark, and the most dignified of the rollicking company.

Mr. John Stubbs, proprietor of the mill, had gone to Dunmoor on business, and although he had given no direction to that effect, and would have been opposed to giving his son any such latitude, young Mr. Stubbs had assumed the role

of proprietor and had given to each of the toymakers their choice of their own handiwork to be used as Christmas gifts, and although as a rule he had been the butt of all their jokes, on this occasion he was voted to be a jolly good fellow. His cousin Tom had taken him one side and had whispered in his ear that his generosity would be likely to lead to marked demonstrations on the part of his father when he returned, but Johnnie had replied that he was a man now —he was twenty-one—and he remarked forcibly, but ungrammatically, that he "would not allow no father to do nothing to him just because he had given away a few toys."

Tom shook his head and thought to himself that although Johnnie might be twenty-one in looks, he was not a man in either brains or stature. He felt sure that little Johnnie would get the worst of it when big John learned the truth.

Johnnie was a little suspicious. "Don't you tell, Tom! If you do, I'll——"

"Why, of course I won't," said Tom. "I wouldn't peach on you if they took away every-

thing in the mill—except Daisy," and he looked towards a young girl who was entering heartily into the fun and spirit of the occasion.

Daisy Dane had a type of beauty which the scientists say will soon disappear from the earth. She was what is called a perfect blonde, having long golden curls, blue eyes, and one of those complexions which so many artists have likened to peaches and cream.

Tom had one accomplishment—he was a fine singer. He had a tenor voice which had not been spoiled by over-cultivation. Old John Stubbs had encouraged the toymakers in their singing, for he had found that when they sang they did more work than when they talked.

"Say, girls," cried Tom, "before you go we must sing one of our songs. What shall it be?"

"Oh, give us that one about the managery," cried Johnnie.

"That's so silly," remarked Miss Bickerstaffe.

"Of course it is," said Nellie, "but it is appropriate. We make all kinds of animals to put in menageries, and we all know just what kind

of noises they make. I think it is a jolly good song."

"So do we!" cried Ethel, Mabel, Violet, Winifred, Agnes, Louise, Alice and Daisy in unison.

With a bow, wow, wow,
And a clack, clack, clack,
With a meow, meow, meow,
And a quack, quack, quack,
With a too, whit, hoo,
And a neigh, neigh, neigh,
With a moo, moo, moo,
And a bray, bray, bray,
With a baa, baa, baa,
And a wee, wee, wee,
Menageries thus are made you see.

Then followed a medley of cries in which goodbyes and Merry Christmases predominated. The company quickly separated, each one intent upon reaching home as soon as possible in order to make preparations for the masquerade.

Tom walked home with Daisy, while Johnnie made his way to the kitchen, the sole occupant of which was Miss Sally Smiles, who was engaged in preparing the evening meal.

CHAPTER III

THE STUBBS FAMILY

Malachi Stubbs built the little red mill and began the manufacture of toys in Middleton-on-Quick. He married a Miss Mary Bull. He was a patriotic Englishman and was proud of his wife's name, so when his son was born he was named John B. Stubbs, his middle name, evidently, being Bull.

Malachi died and left his business to his son, John B., who took as his life partner a Miss Polly Ashe. They decided to name their son John A. Stubbs, for it had been a rule in the family that the son's middle name should be that of his mother.

Everything went well until young John A. began to associate with the youths of the village. He was called Jack by his school chums. One day a youth, with whom he had had a difficulty,

and who had learned his middle name, called him Jack Ashe Stubbs. Then his fond parents reflected that christian names were apt to be forgotten and nicknames were apt to stick, and they doubted the wisdom of their choice. Being Dissenters, they were not bound by the strict rules of the Church of England, and the announcement was made that the son of Mr. John Bull Stubbs, Sr., would afterwards be known as John Bull Stubbs, Jr. The point of the joke being lost, young John's chums decided to call him Johnnie instead of Jack, and he was the roly-poly little fellow to whom the reader has been introduced.

Tom Bright was a nephew of the late Mrs. Stubbs. He was a strong, healthy lad, but he disliked the toy business, and when a man dislikes his work, he rarely becomes an efficient workman. Tom was nearly twenty-one years of age and would soon be free from his apprenticeship. With that disregard for ways and means so often shown by young people, he had made up his mind that life in the future could have no pleasure for him except as the husband

of Daisy Dane. She was the owner of a little cottage, and Tom, so far as he knew, had not a pound in the world. But love laughs at locksmiths and the lack of money. Daisy had the cottage and they had the love, and the wherewithal with which to pay the bills after they were married was an after consideration.

Mr. John Bull Stubbs., Sr., had been a widower for many years. The cares of the household devolved upon Miss Sarah Ann Smiles. Miss Sally was a mystery, and her advent in the Stubbs family was mysterious. She had been found upon the Stubbs doorstep, neatly packed in a basket, with no word to indicate from where she came or who were her parents. Mrs. Stubbs had a motherly heart and insisted upon the little stranger being taken in. Little Johnnie was two years old at the time, but his mother said he was only a baby, and she could take care of two just as well as one; so little Johnnie and little Sally grew up together as brother and sister, but Johnnie was much pleased when he grew older to learn that Sally was not his sister, for his heart had been filled

John Bull Stubbs, Sr.

with a divine passion, and he felt as did his cousin Tom—that there was only one girl in the world for him, and that girl was Sally.

It cannot truly be said that his affection was reciprocated; in fact, Miss Sally looked upon him as an antagonist rather than as a lover. But Johnnie looked upon their wordy and often fistic contests as mere love spats and was determined to make her his wife, although he knew that such a course would be in direct opposition to his father's wishes.

As a matter of fact, few people ever did anything that pleased John Bull Stubbs, Sr. He was what would be called a crank. Old Malachi had been satisfied to cut toys out of wood, paint them impossible colors, and put them into arks which would have sunk had they been placed in water. Soon after John Bull Stubbs, Sr., took control of the business, however, mechanical toys came into the market, and it became necessary to insert springs and wheels and squeaks in order to meet the demands of the more modern trade. Mr. John B. Stubbs, Sr., was long-headed, and he felt sure that the

mechanical toy would be followed by something more complex, more scientific, and more satisfactory to the young generation. For that reason he had given much time to the study of electricity and its application to toys.

A man with one idea is apt to be a very disagreeable companion, and it is probable because John B. Stubbs, Sr., was so good an inventor that he was so unsatisfactory as a mere man. Electricity was his hobby, and when a man has a hobby he rides it to the exclusion of all other duties.

The necessary expenditure of money to perfect his inventions had so drawn upon his income that he had become niggardly in his household expenses. He showed no disposition to stint his son and heir, but he looked upon Tom as a near approach to a hog, as regarded his appetite, and upon Sally as very much of a pig. It is hard, however, for the male head of a household to learn all the intricacies of the food problem, and although the table was set sparingly, Miss Smiles had improvised a larder in a far-away closet, the contents of which were

known only to herself and Tom, and to the door of which she had the only key. One day the owner, Mr. Stubbs, had shown a disposition to utilize the closet, but Sally had remonstrated, saying that she kept her brooms and brushes therein, and so she did, but they were not kept upon the shelves with which the closet was liberally supplied.

The business had prospered Old Malachi had carried on the business with the help only of his wife and one assistant, but his son had so broadened the outlet for his goods, that his nephew and nine young girls were given constant employment.

The reader has now become acquainted with the locale of the story and with the principal personages therein, but if he were a person prone to flights of the wildest imagination, he could not have conceived such a series of events as took place within the little red mill within the next forty-eight hours, and which it is the duty of the writer to record as best he may, assuming, however, no responsibility whatever for the goings on or the result of them.

CHAPTER IV

THE SON AND THE SERVANT

Tom did not go to the kitchen, for he knew Sally was under strict orders not to give him anything to eat except at meal time, and then Mr. Stubbs Senior's sharp eyes quickly discerned any indulgence that might be called overeating. Tom had had a key made to the closet where Sally kept her brooms and brushes and "something else," and he made his way thither, soliloquizing as he went: "Uncle Bull hasn't got back yet, lucky for me. I'm as hungry as an ostrich. Funny Uncle Bull stays away so long. He's usually on hand to see that nobody goes home a minute early. I suppose he's buying presents for his beautiful son, John Junior. Precious little will Sally or I get for our hard work."

At that moment Johnnie's voice rose high in the air: "Sally! Sally!! Sally!!!"

Tom, who had opened the closet door and extracted a hunk of Bologna sausage, some barley bread, and a bowl of pickled cabbage, burst into a loud laugh.

"There he is—the beloved child—the only son and heir. I've heard of sons being called chips of the old block, but John Junior is a bigger blockhead than his old chip of a father—not meaning to be disrespectful to my uncle."

Johnnie had reached the kitchen as Sally's shrill voice attested: "Go away, John Junior! Stop your fooling!! Let me alone, I say, or I'll slap you!!!"

Tom chuckled. "Johnnie and Sally are at it again. They're always quarreling, then making up. They say true lovers always do that—but I never quarrel with Daisy. I never quarrel with anybody or anything but my stomach. That is always telling me that I don't treat it well."

"John Junior, take that!"

There was a sound that made Tom think of

an interview he had with the schoolmaster, when his ears tingled for a whole day—then the kitchen door was slammed and he heard no more.

Tom took the last spoonful of cabbage. "Uncle Bull says over-feeding makes me lazy. Lazy? Why, I'm so weak sometimes I haven't got strength enough to eat a good square meal—if I could get it."

He closed and locked the closet door. "I feel better now. My lunch may give me an appetite for the fine Christmas supper I am going to have with my Daisy to-night, before we go to the masquerade at Dunmoor Barracks. I'll go up to Toby Whackers's and see if he has my costume ready."

Exciting events had taken place in the kitchen. Sally's cries had not deterred Johnnie from chasing and catching her. Her capture was followed by energetic hugs and resounding kisses. Sally struggled and finally broke away from her impetuous captor. She faced him with reddened cheeks, disordered tresses, and an angry gleam in her eyes.

"Keep away from me! Let me alone, I say! John Junior, you act like a great big calf!"

Johnnie clasped his hands in front of him, looked downward, and said, humbly: "I can't help it, Sally. Them's the symptoms."

Sally laughed derisively: "Symptoms! Symptoms of what? It can't be commonsense."

"No, Sally; it's something that comes up in my throat." He ran out his tongue to show his condition.

Sally turned her back on him.

"I can't eat as much as I used to, Sally; I can't work! I can't sleep nights for thinking of you. Oh, Sally, it's love—love—love!"

As he finished his avowal he struck an attitude and looked unutterable things at Sally, who had faced him again.

"John Stubbs, you needn't waste your time falling in love with me. Rich men's sons don't usually marry their father's servants." She continued spitefully: "You needn't think you can bamboozle me just because your father has got money. I'm only a waif. Who knows what I am? I was named Sarah Ann after your

grandmother, the dear old soul! She loved me, and just because I laughed when they took me out of the basket, they called me Smiles—but my smiles are not for you, young man, and money can't buy them."

Johnnie had mounted a chair and was sitting on the back of it. "Money ain't bad to take, Sally; it makes a fellow popular with the girls."

Sally pouted: "Money ain't everything."

"No, Sally, 'tain't—but it's a mighty handy thing to have in your trousers pocket."

Sally relented slightly: "Oh, the money's all right, with something attractive to go with it; but before a boy like you thinks of getting married, he ought to grow up, and beg, borrow, or steal some brains."

Johnnie tilted his chair too far backwards. It tipped over and he went sprawling upon the floor. As he scrambled to his feet, full of indignation, and with an aching crazy-bone, he cried: "Don't you call me a boy, Sarah Ann!"

It was just time for Sally's hot temper to rise: "Don't you call me Sarah Ann. You never do, except when you're mad with me. You're a

mean little sawed-off, and I hate you. I say I hate you."

Johnnie could only ejaculate: "Oh, you're only a—"

Sally did not allow him to finish the sentence: "I know what I am—I'm only a servant. Your father calls me a scullion—and I know what you are—and you mean to deceive me, you do." At this point her temper over-stepped all bounds, and she screamed: "But don't you imagine, young Bull, just because you're old Bull's son that you can pull the wool over my eyes."

Johnnie was afraid that his father had returned and would hear their altercation: "I'll stuff something down your throat, Sally, if you don't stop your noise."

His threat did not abate her passion, but inflamed it still more: "You love me, don't you? You'd choke me to death, wouldn't you? You're a fine young gentleman, ain't you, to abuse a nice little girl like me?"

Then, womanlike, she burst into tears, and heart-broken sobs were heard instead of harsh words.

Johnnie was visibly affected. He turned away to swallow a big lump in his throat.

"Poor thing! She's gone all to pieces! Too bad!" Then he turned supplicatingly to the weeping damsel. "Ssh! Sally, please stop you're noise. Dad'll hear."

Sally stamped her foot. "No, I won't. I don't care if he does."

Johnnie patted her on the shoulder. "Stop, Sally—that's a good girl—Sally dear."

Sally glanced at John through her tears. "Don't talk that way to me unless you really mean it—which, way down in you're heart, you know you don't."

Johnnie felt that now was the moment for a reconciliation. He took Sally's half-resisting hand in his: "Yes, I do, Sally. Didn't you know it? Of course you've suspected."

Sally drew back her hand. "No, I didn't. If you deceive me, John Stubbs, I'll make you pay for breach of promise," and her voice was raised to its highest pitch.

Johnnie squeezed her arm: "Ssh! Sally! Dad may come in."

"Yes, and how quick you'd change your mind if he did. He would never give his consent, and then you'd throw me overboard."

Johnnie dropped upon his knees: "No, I wouldn't, Sally. I don't care what dad says. I'm of age. I'm a man. I'll never marry anybody but you."

Sally eyed him intently: "Get up, John Stubbs. I don't see why you like me. I'm not stylish. I'm not like those stuck-up village girls who are always so very modest and bashful—who simper and smirk, and talk prunes and prisms—when they are in company. But you just catch them alone with a young man! Now, that isn't my style. If I was alone and a fellow tried to kiss me, I'd scratch his eyes out. But in a crowd—well, that makes a difference."

Sally's statement of her sentiments was evidently pleasing to Johnnie. He put his arm about her waist. "Well, two's a crowd. Come, Sally, let's have a real kiss."

Sally eluded his caress and ran about the room closely followed by Johnnie, who, at last,

caught her in his arms and imprinted a kiss full upon her lips.

At that crucial moment the kitchen door was opened—John Stubbs, Senior, stood there with a basket hanging upon one arm, and both full of bundles. For a moment he stood transfixed by the unwelcome spectacle; then, throwing the bundles right and left, he dropped the heavily-laden basket upon the floor, and, rushing forward, pushed Sally in one direction and Johnnie in another. His usually red face became purple in hue, and for a moment his lips refused to frame the words that sprang to them.

The loving culprits cowered, for they knew that when the storm broke there would be no shelter for them.

CHAPTER V

AN IRATE FATHER

When Mr. Stubbs, Sr., found his voice, he exclaimed: "So! So!! So!!! What's going on here? I caught you, didn't I? Son, you ought to look higher."

Johnnie immediately heeded his father's admonition and looked upward.

Mr. Stubbs, Sr., saw that his remark had evidently been misunderstood, and added, pointing his finger at Sally: "Than a servant girl." Evidently the elderly gentleman's ideas were somewhat confused: "Ah! Let me recall my last thought. Oh! Johnnie, you must remember to remember that you are my son, and that she—" As he spoke he pointed his finger again at Sally —"is our servant. Degenerate son of a noble sire, come here."

Johnnie approached him slowly.

"Come here," I say. "I have a good mind to thrash you. Ah! Let me recall my last thought. Oh! John, Junior, you must remember to remember, and you too, Sally, that this is a toy manufactory conducted on business principles, and if there is any kissing to be done, the proprietor will attend to it."

At this remark both Sally and Johnnie pouted, and it must be acknowledged that the young man made a more effective demonstration than did his female companion.

"That ain't fair, Dad. You said I would have a chance to learn all the different parts of the business."

Mr. Stubbs shook his head solemnly: "Kissing isn't business; it's profit. Now, Johnnie, go and grease your hair, and put on your Duke of Wellington suit."

"I don't want to, Dad. The trousers are so big, the wind blows up and makes me chilly."

"John, Junior, you do as I tell you. The trousers you have on are too short to go visiting in."

"'Tain't my fault, Dad; they're auction pants and went to the highest bidder. They'd suit a short fellow, but a long fellow like me has to get into them too far."

"Hurry up, Johnnie. I know what's best for you. When I tell you to do anything, you must not talk back. We are invited out to supper, and your Duke of Wellington suit will give you plenty of room. You must remember that what you eat will make a great saving at home."

"I know why you don't let me wear my Duke of Wellington suit at home, Dad." As he spoke a broad smile covered his face and Sally, who had been a listener to the conversation, with difficulty restrained a peal of laughter.

Mr. Stubbs saw the smile upon his son's face, and smiling in return asked: "Why, Johnnie?"

Johnnie was ready with his answer. He was a born mimic and what his father had said had given him an idea. "Because it makes you feel poor when you look at me and think how much it would cost to fatten me up so that the suit would fit me."

Sally could restrain herself no longer and

burst into a loud laugh between a screech and a scream.

Mr. Stubbs felt that it was time to terminate the conversation, which seemed to be against him: "Get along! Get out!"

Johnnie was entirely destitute of that desirable moral quality known as filial respect. Although his father was severe with him in some ways, in other respects he had been given the widest latitude. Youth is apt to presume, and young John, when the skies were bright, and there was no storm in sight, looked upon his father as a play-fellow. To him he was in really a *pater familias*, and he never failed to go to the extreme point of familiarity whenever occasion offered. To his father's command to get out, he answered: "All right, Dad," but he did not leave the room immediately. Instead, he turned to Sally, caught her in his arms and hugged her, despite her efforts to release herself.

Mr. Stubbs' attention was attracted, and seeing what was taking place, he stooped down to pick up one of the bundles which he had dropped,

with the probable intention of throwing it at his son.

Johnnie was supplied with one of those instruments of torture—a bean-blower—and his father's quick application of a hand to his bald head showed that the shot had taken effect.

Mr. Stubbs, now thoroughly incensed, ran after his son. Johnnie kicked the basket in front of him, and the old gentleman stumbled over it, falling full length. He scrambled to his feet just in time to throw the bundle which he had in his hand at Johnnie. It failed to hit him, however, striking the jamb of the door as Johnnie ran out and closed it behind him.

This little byplay increased Sally's merriment, and she uttered another loud peal of laughter.

The old gentleman approached her, rubbing his head, for the bean had been well and strongly shot. He stopped and looked at his serving maid:

"Ah! Let me recall my last thought. Miss Smiles—Miss Ann Smiles—Miss Sarah Ann Smiles—I wish you to remember to remember

that my son is not to kiss you any more. What did you let him do it for, anyway?"

"How could I help it?" cried Sally. "Great strong man like Johnnie—poor little girl like me."

"You are a poor girl, that's a fact; too poor for Johnnie, and he ought to see it. But if he does not, I want you to remember to remember, Miss Smiles, that if you lead my innocent boy astray, it will be dangerous business for you."

Although Sally was but a serving maid, we have seen from her conversation with young Mr. Stubbs that she was not deficient in spirit and was well able to take her own part.

"Well, Mr. Stubbs, if you don't want your calf of a son to go astray, why don't you tie him up? That's what they always do."

"Well, I mean to tie him up, and I'll tie you up too. But what is your little game?"

"Don't worry about me, Mr. Stubbs; my intentions are perfectly honorable." Then in a deliciously naive way she added: "Johnnie says he's going to marry me."

Under the circumstances Mr. Stubbs must be

excused for not being able to control his feelings. He knew nothing about North American Indians, but when he fully comprehended Sally's remark, he gave vent to a yell which would have done credit to a Comanche.

"What! Marry you! A kitchen scullion! My boy! So you think you would like me for a father-in-law, do you? Let me hear any more of this nonsense and out-doors you go, trunk and traps."

To use a particularly significant expression, Sally's blood was up. She snapped her fingers in her employer's face: "Why don't you do it now, when you're real mad? Why don't you do it now? I'm willing to go. I can get a better place than this anywhere."

"Not on my recommendation," said Mr. Stubbs. "When I do turn you out, you'll go to the workhouse."

Sally was so impolite as to shake her fist in Mr. Stubb's face: "Don't you flatter yourself! I wouldn't own up that I listened one night when you said I did, but I did just the same, and I saw Old Pinch pay you some money, and I heard

him say something about Sally. Now, what was he talking about me for? If you turn me out, I'll go and ask him, and if he won't tell me, I'll go to the Mayor, and he'll make him."

Mr. Stubbs' face was a picture of astonishment and a marked change took place in his manner. He patted Sally on the shoulder and said, in a patronizing way: "Don't get excited, Sally. I'm impulsive, and, as you know, my son is just like me."

Sally shook her head by way of a decided negative.

Mr. Stubbs continued: "But you are foolish, as all young girls are. Now, my dear Sally, you must promise to let my Johnnie alone, and then you need not go until after the holiday work is done."

Sally's wrath was again enkindled: "Oh, you are very kind. You will let me do all the hard work and then kick me out." She stamped her foot. "I will promise nothing of the sort. I like Johnnie, and if he insists upon kissing me, I shall not object, and if he asks me to marry him, I shall say 'Yes.' I shall say 'Yes';

do you hear? And as he is your only son, we are sure to get all your money one of these days."

Mr. Stubbs' secret thoughts ran somewhat in this wise: "What a cool, calculating wretch that girl is!" Aloud, he remarked: "Don't you be too sure, young woman. I will build a hospital and give all my money to that."

Sally laughed hysterically: "Oh, yes. I'd call it the Bull Hospital; that would be a fine name for it."

Mr. Stubbs shook his clenched fist in her face: "Young woman, there's too much talk in you! You've got to go!"

Sally placed her hands upon her hips and looked at him defiantly: "All right, sir, any time you say. While you're about it, you'd better put Tom out too. You've been going to do it for a year. He'd be better off in the workhouse than he is here."

Her reference to Tom caused Mr. Stubbs to remember to remember.

"Tom! Tom!! Where is that lazy rascal? He ought to be at work making up for lost time."

Sally burst into a loud laugh: "He is."

"Where?"

Sally was so full of merriment that she could scarcely ejaculate: "He's out in the wood-shed eating."

"Eating!" cried the old man. "Eating again? Why he had a bowl of porridge last night for his supper, and the balance of it this morning for breakfast."

Sally was not noted for her close adherence to the truth in some particulars; besides, she had always enjoyed saying and doing all that she could to worry her employer.

"Well, he said he was hungry, and I gave him all we had left over from dinner."

There was nothing that so aroused Mr. Stubbs' ire as a disposition, as he called it, to gluttony. "All of it?" he cried. "He'll kill himself. The glutton! I must stop his extravagance or he'll make a pauper of me."

Overcome by passion, he kicked his bundles in every direction, again stumbled over the basket, vented his anger upon it by kicking it furiously into a corner of the kitchen, then left the room.

Sally was inclined to soliloquize; "Mr. Bull

is an ugly old man, and telling him the truth don't do him any good. He imposes on his good-natured son, almost starves his nephew, and abuses a nice litle girl like me. He would put me outdoors, but he knows that I listened that night when Old Pinch was here. I wish I knew what Old Pinch had to say about me. There must be some mystery about it. Mr. Eales is an old miser. He lives all alone and he never bought any toys, and I don't see why he should pay Mr. Bull money. Yes, there's some mystery, and I'm in it. But I will find out what it is some day."

CHAPTER VI

GETTING READY FOR SOMETHING

When Sally told Mr. Stubbs that Tom was in the wood-shed eating, she was not really cognizant of that fact. She was a quick-witted young girl and had imagined that Tom had had plenty of time in which to satisfy his appetite. She felt sure that he had not returned to the toy-shop where he was obliged to pass so many long hours of each day. Some people hit the nail on the head unintentionally, and this is what Sally had done. The fact was, that despite the lunch at the closet, Tom had again felt the pangs of hunger, and was regaling himself with a huge piece of Bologna sausage and a large slice of bread, when Mr. Stubbs opened the door of the wood-shed and rushed towards him.

The young man, startled by the sudden ap-

pearance of his uncle, was taken at a disadvantage, and before he could resist, the meat and bread had been taken from him. Then ensued not a passage of arms, but a passage of words.

"What an appetite you have! You're a greedy glutton!"

"Yes," said Tom; "I'm blessed with a good appetite, but I get very little to satisfy it."

"What are you talking about? Didn't you have a nice mutton stew last week?"

"Yes, it was a stew; the mutton was old and stale."

"If you would work as well as you eat—"

Tom broke in: "I think the work I do is as good as the food I get."

Mr. Stubbs became irate again: "If you would work with all your might, it would pay me to feed you better, but you sulk and loaf half the time, and I have caught you asleep while the others were working. That kind of work deserves an empty stomach, and you'll get it."

"Well, if I had more food and more sleep, I could do more work, but you are too mean and stingy to see that."

Mr. Stubbs looked at the remnant of Bologna sausage and the piece of bread that was left: "You're a glutton and a sloth, and if I don't look after you, you're sure to die from over-eating. Now, sir, go to bed, and don't forget to remember to remember that you'll get no breakfast to-morrow morning."

"No Christmas breakfast!" cried Tom. "That's an outrage. Isn't the laborer worthy of his hire?"

"Yes, but your labor comes higher than my business will allow. Why, you've eaten enough now to bring on a famine."

"Uncle Bull, I have worked hard for fourteen years for you and have never got anything but a bare living."

"You ungrateful wretch! What do you mean by a bare living?"

"I mean barely enough to eat to keep me alive, and barely time enough to eat it in; a bare board to sleep on, and barely time to get it warm, and just enough clothes to keep me from being bare."

Mr. Stubbs' face grew red with anger; "Keep

"Wages! Pay you wages! Didn't I take you in when you were a poor miserable outcast?"

on, young man, and the lies will choke you to death. It's a wonder the bears don't come down and eat you."

Tom had a marked sense of humor: "I'm not fat enough, uncle, to make a bear meal. Why don't you pay me wages, the same as you do the others, and let me board with somebody who can appreciate the feelings of a hungry man?"

"Wages! Pay you wages! Didn't I take you in when you were a poor miserable outcast, and do for you what no one else would? Don't forget to remember to remember that."

"Uncle Bull, I shall never forget how you took me in, and how you've done for me. I don't believe any person would have done what you've done for me. But, Mr. Bull, when I'm of age, Mr. Bull, which will be in less than two years, Mr. Bull, I mean to be bright enough to find out what became of the thousand pounds that my father left me, Mr. Bull, and which disappeared so mysteriously, Mr. Bull, and don't forget to remember to remember that, Mr. Bull."

Mr. Stubbs' face took on a purplish hue.

"Don't try to bully me. Now, go to bed. I am invited out to supper to-night and Johnnie is going with me. That will reduce expenses."

There was a closet in the wood-shed. Mr. Stubbs unlocked the door and looked in. "Come, get in here! I'm going to lock you in while we're gone, so that you won't be increasing expenses by eating up everything that's left in the house."

Tom said plaintively: "I'm so hungry!"

"Hungry! You anaconda! Why, you've eaten enough to bring on a nightmare. Come, get in here. There's a bench in the closet and you can have a nap until I return. Sleep is great relief for a hungry man—" He laughed sardonically—"and it isn't expensive either."

Tom could not forebear a parting shot before his uncle locked the closet door: "My dear uncle, if sleep is so cheap, why don't you let me have more of it?"

Mr. Stubbs slammed the door, turned the key, put it in his pocket, and made his way back to the kitchen.

A few minutes passed, a light grating sound

was heard, the door of the closet opened, and Tom's head appeared.

"Ha! ha!! My dear uncle, I have a key too. I do not propose to miss my Christmas eve supper, and I mean to go to the masquerade with my Daisy."

CHAPTER VII

THE TOYMAKER'S SECRET

When Mr. Stubbs re-entered the kitchen, he found himself its sole occupant. He sat down in a high-backed chair by the open fireplace.

"The boy's more than half right, but he doesn't know it; he only imagines it. But how in the world did he find it out? I mean, what led him to think that there was a thousand pounds? That's what it was, but it has grown in fourteen years to more than ten times as much, but it was not money—it was my brains that did it. One of these days I suppose I shall have to settle up with him and allow him the principal and 2 per cent interest. That's not exorbitant."

For a while he sat in deep meditation. "Ah! let me recall my last thought. Oh! I must remember to remember that among his father's private papers I found the idea that suggested

my great work, which I have just completed—my beautiful, life-sized doll, into which, by means of magical incantations and the wonderful revivifying effect of electricity, I mean to put the breath of life, and—" He raised his voice to the extent of his vocal capacity— "make her a living creature." As he uttered the words he arose and lifted his right hand, making an unusual and impressive appearance.

While Mr. Stubbs had been talking with Tom, and advocating the advantages of a low dietary, Johnnie had donned his Duke of Wellington suit, and, not finding his father in the kitchen, had gone out-doors to make a survey of the weather conditions.

The kitchen was brightly lighted, and Johnnie could not have been seen by his father even if he had looked at the window.

When Johnnie heard the loud voice and saw the uplifted hand, he said to himself: "Dad's got something on his mind," and as he never saw or heard anything that he did not immediately tell Sally about, he started in search of her.

Mr. Stubbs still kept his imposing attitude.

"I am alone! Like Robinson Crusoe, I am monarch of all I survey. Now is a good time to see my doll, the climatic apex of ethnological art."

He took a bunch of keys from his pocket, and selecting one, went to a closet, which he unlocked and entered. He returned almost immediately, dragging a platform, upon which stood a life-sized doll, handsomely dressed.

Mr. Stubbs resumed his seat in the high backed chair and regarded the doll with a look of great satisfaction. "What a pleasure to look at my wonderful doll, so beautifully still, and still so beautiful! Ah! Let me recall my last thought! Oh! I must not forget to remember to remember that soon she will breathe and live —live like the rest of us—but when? My book on anthropolitico-ethnologipological magic says: 'Never attempt revivatory incantational postulations unless it is a tempestuously wild night.' I yearn for such a night. I must look at my almanac."

He took the almanac from the mantlepiece and bent over to consult it.

"He returned almost immediately, dragging a platform, upon which stood a life-sized doll."

Johnnie had found Sally, and Tom had found them both. Johnnie had related his experience at the window, to which Sally and Johnnie returned. They lifted the sash several inches and listened intently. Tom opened the kitchen door a short distance and was equally inquisitive.

The weight of the sash being too heavy to be supported by their fingers, Sally and Johnnie withdrew them, and the window fell with a heavy bang. Tom heard the noise, and not knowing what it meant, slammed the kitchen door and made his way back to the wood-shed.

Mr. Stubbs jumped up excitedly. "Was that thunder?" He listened. "No, it could not have been. What an old fool I am to be frightened at nothing. It is too abominably pleasant to work any magicolindrical spells to-night. I will see what the almanac says, anyway. It is the most satisfactory book published. It has all kinds of weather in it, and a change for better or worse every other day. Let's see! What year is this? That don't make any difference. An almanac is just as good for one year as it is for another. What day is this, anyway?

December twenty-fourth. To-morrow is Christmas. How time flies!"

He threw the book upon the floor: "An almanac is always full of information and advice that nobody wants. I must consult my zodiacal cymbals."

He entered the closet from which he had brought the doll, and soon returned with a huge pair of cymbals. He struck them together with a loud clang, but when he did so he was so close to the candle, which stood upon the table, that it was blown out.

At that instant, Johnnie, who was provided with his bean-blower, and who had propped up the sash of the kitchen window with a stick, took good aim and struck his father in the head.

Mr. Stubbs clashed the symbols wildly together, with the evident purpose of exorcising the evil spirits which surrounded him.

Tom opened the kitchen door and gave a loud, mocking laugh and then retired quickly. Johnnie, seeing that further markmanship was prevented by the lack of light, had secured his fish-horn, upon which he blew a long, resounding

blast. Before its notes had died away, Sally entered the kitchen, and startled by the clanging of the cymbals, uttered a loud scream and retraced her footsteps.

Mr. Stubbs leaned upon the table, shaking from head to foot. He waited for several minutes, but as the sounds were not repeated, he relighted the candle.

"There must be rats, cats, bats, and screech-owls around this house. My nerves are getting weak. I'm an old man and may drop off suddenly. But I'll leave my son a good business and a beautiful wife. She looks just like Daisy Dane—the prettiest girl in the village. When I made the face, I took pains to remember to remember just how she looked."

He dragged the platform upon which the doll stood back into the closet, locked the door, and turned towards the table. As he did so, he was confronted by Sally, who had entered the room in time to see the doll.

CHAPTER VIII

SALLY MAKES A TRADE

SALLY pointed towards the door of the closet: "Who is she?"

Mr. Stubbs, whose nerves were considerably shaken by past experiences, answered one question with another: "She's who?"

"That's just what I want to know, Mr. Stubbs. Who is that girl you've just hidden away in the closet?"

Mr. Stubbs hesitated: "She? Let me recall my last thought. I will try to remember to remember. She? Oh! She's an old friend of the family."

Sally's nose became quite *retroussé*: "Old friend! She's too young to be a very old friend. I see how it is. You are the old friend. I'm shocked, Mr. Stubbs. Do you hear? I'm shocked. One of our leading citizens, and at your time of

life too!" She covered her face with her hands.

Mr. Stubbs betrayed indignation: "What do you mean? At my time of life?" He raised his hand threateningly. "Do you mean to insinuate——"

Sally retaliated by shaking her fist: "Mr. Stubbs, don't speak to me in that tone of voice. You're a bald-headed, insinuating, prevaricating, horrid, double-dealing, weak old man." She started to run out of the room, but Mr. Stubbs caught her by the arm and held her fast. "I'll tell Tom; I'll tell Johnnie," and then at the top of her voice she screamed: "I'll tell everybody."

Mr. Stubbs saw that the situation was getting serious: "Be quiet, you fool. You can make more by keeping my secret."

"I won't, Mr. Stubbs. I can't keep a secret. I don't want to. I say I won't. When I tell, they'll put you in the stocks, and then Tom, and me, and Johnnie will come and laugh at you," and by way of practice as it were, Sally laughed hysterically.

Then Mr. Stubbs said coaxingly: "Sally, wouldn't you like a new dress?"

It did not take Sally long to reply: "Ain't I a woman? Of course I would."

"That's all right, Sally. Now, you keep your tongue still, like a good little girl, about that," and he pointed to the closet door, "and I will give you a nice new dress."

"Silk?"

"No; silk is too expensive."

"Yes, Mr. Stubbs, but the secret is very valuable."

"I can't afford it, Sally."

"Well, I'm sorry, but I can't afford to keep such a great big secret for anything less. After all," and she laughed, "I think I would rather have the fun of telling than to have the new dress."

Mr. Stubbs raised both his hands deprecatingly: "No, no. I accept your offer; it is a bargain; you shall have a silk dress."

"That's very low for it, Mr. Stubbs; you ought to throw in boots, stockings, gloves, and a new bonnet."

Mr. Stubbs felt that his secret was likely to cost him dearly, and he saw the necessity of

cultivating the most amicable relations with his serving maid. He chucked her under the chin and said softly: "You're a nice little girl, Sally."

"It has taken you a long time to find that out, Mr. Stubbs." She looked up at him archly: "I guess if I stay here long enough I'm likely to become a friend of the family some time."

Mr. Stubbs realized that it would not do to trifle with the possesser of his secret: "Ah, Sally, if I give you a nice new bonnet, won't you give me a nice little kiss?"

Sally's lip projected and her nose was more *retroussé* than before: "That's an awful high price for a bonnet. Silk?"

Mr. Stubbs turned away and said sharply: "Confound it, no. Suppose I'm going to dress you in silks and satins?"

"A kiss is always worth the most you can get for it; besides, I can't wear anything but a silk bonnet with my new dress."

Mr. Stubbs realized that he was in the toils: "Well, it shall be silk." He tried to kiss her, but she pushed him back.

"For one kiss, one silk bonnet; for two, stockings; for three, gloves; four, boots. You takes your choice and pays for what you takes."

Mr. Stubbs took the first kiss. Sally was so impolite as to wipe her mouth after receiving it, and so morally defective as to think to herself that it was always best to have the head of the family on your side.

The exercise in osculation had so absorbed the attention of the two principals, that they were not aware of the presence of a third person, until Johnnie remarked: "When the kitten's away, the old cat plays with the mouse."

His father turned upon him fiercely: "How did you come in here?"

Johnnie smiled blandly: "The window was open and I blew in."

"What were you at the window for?"

Johnnie hesitated: "I was just walking by."

"Yes; is that all?"

"No—I made a snowball to throw at the dog."

"Yes; is that all?"

"N—o; I could not help seeing that there was a light in the room."

"Yes; is that all?"

"N—o; I could not help looking in, and—"

"Yes, yes; is that all?"

"N—o; I saw—"

Mr. Stubbs looked savagely at his son: "What?"

Though Johnnie was young, he had an old head on his shoulders: "I didn't see nothing that it's worth while to remember."

"Very good, young man, and you see that you do not remember to remember. Now, you go out-doors and wait for me until I get ready."

"I don't want to; it's too cold out there."

Mr. Stubbs grasped a heavy oaken stick that stood by the fireplace: "Well, take your choice —the cold outside or a warming inside."

Johnnie felt that he had not been treated fairly and he determined to resist the parental authority: "I don't want to. I won't go. No, I won't."

Mr. Stubbs, with uplifted stick, advanced to-

wards the young man: "You won't go? Well, we'll see about that."

Sally ran between them, grasped Mr. Stubbs' arm, and cried: "Stop, Mr. Stubbs; don't you dare to hit Johnnie."

The old man gave her a violent push: "Shut up! You've sold out."

Sally ran to Johnnie and threw her arms about his neck: "You touch Johnnie, and I won't have your old dress, nor your bonnet either. I'll tell him everything, and more too."

"Well, Sally, I'll forgive him this time." Then feeling that he had relented too easily, he added: "The next time I thrash him, I'll remember to remember and give him double."

Mr. Stubbs replaced the stick by the fireplace and, turning suddenly, found Sally and Johnnie embracing each other.

"What do you mean, you young rascal, by kissing Sally right before my face and eyes."

"Oh, nothing, Dad; I was only following mother's advice."

"Nonsense! What do you mean?"

Johnnie was determined to justify himself:

"Why, mother told me always to follow your example."

Johnnie started to run from the room, but he did not escape the slipper which his father threw after him.

Sally brought him his boots. In his heart Mr. Stubbs heartily appreciated the witty remark Johnnie had made. He chuckled to himself and said: "That's my boy—my boy. Here, Sally!"

"Of course."

"I'm invited out to supper to-night with Johnnie."

"Of course."

"Bring me my hat and coat and cane."

"Of course."

Sally brought them and helped him on with his coat.

"We may be out late, Sally."

"Of course."

"Put out the light—"

"Of course."

Sally snuffed the candle by putting Mr. Stubbs' hat over it. The log in the fireplace, which had been sputtering for half an hour,

broke into a bright blaze and lighted up the room.

"Look out, Sally; you got grease all over my hat."

"Of course. Why not? It's going on your head, isn't it?"

"Now, Sally, don't forget to remember to remember—" But he forgot to remember. "Put out the bed, lock the candle, and go to the key; here's the door."

Sally took the key with the stereotyped remark: "Of course."

Mr. Stubbs felt that there had been some mistake in the location of his last words: "Let me recall my last thought. Oh! Sally, yes, lock the door, put out the candle—" which Sally had re-lighted at the blazing log—"and go to bed."

Johnnie burst into the room crying: "Oh, Sally, Dad, come quick, quick, quick. Here are the carollers."

They all rushed from the room. Borne upon the night air were the words of a gladsome song, teaching the same lesson that had been rung out by the bells hours before.

CHAPTER IX

THE LITTLE COT BY THE RIVER

A SHORT distance from the red mill stood a little cot. It was near the river, and after the River Quick had turned Mr. Stubbs' wheel, flecked with foam it dashed by the cottage, still singing, in a minor key, the song it had learned as it reached the edge of the dam and jumped into the depths beneath. It was the same old song it had sung since Daisy Dane was a baby.

In those days, not so long gone, her mother, Ruth Dane, had sung her to sleep, her rich soprano voice rising high above the sound of the waters but gaining and giving an added charm.

Daisy Dane had been a beautiful child and a happy life had added to her beauty as she grew to womanhood. A great sorrow had come to her when but six years old, but it had been tempered for her, although it had increased the grief of others. Daisy did not see her mother

die, nor did she see her buried. Her grandfather, who lived on the coast, fell ill, and his daughter Ruth felt that it was her duty to visit him— perhaps for the last time. She went, leaving her only child, Daisy, in the care of her friend, Mrs. Morton, who had just become a bride.

No one knew just how it happened, but Ruth Dane had fallen from a cliff near her parents' house. Her body was washed out to sea and was never recovered.

Back to the little cot by the river came Grandpa and Grandma Larkin. Little Daisy's cries for her mother received but one answer— "You'll see her again some day"—and after a while the grief became but a memory, although for years the little girl would press her face against the window-pane and keep her eyes fixed upon the long stretch of white road that ran by the cot and the mill. At last she would turn away with a smothered sob, run to her own room, bury her face in her pillow with one word on her lips—and that word was "Mother".

Grandpa and Grandma Larkin were true to their trust. They sold their own house, and the

proceeds were used to make life easy and happy for the granddaughter who had taken her mother's place in their hearts. None of her wishes went ungratified if their simple income could afford it. In one way only had she crossed them, but she did not know it. They had looked higher for her than Tom Bright—that shiftless nephew of John B. Stubbs. They were sure Captain Horatio Sabreton of His Majesty's 44th Hussars was in love with her. Tom Bright was a penniless toymaker, while Captain Sabreton was the third son of an earl, and might some day—for such things had happened—be an earl himself—and then Daisy would be a countess, which, in the opinion of her doting grandparents, was just what she was intended for.

But love will go where it is sent, and Daisy loved Tom; so no word of protest was raised, and if Tom was starved and brow-beaten at the mill, when he was at the cottage he was feasted and treated like a favorite son. Daisy's blue eyes would lose their lustre if filled with tears, and that pretty head, with its wealth of golden curls,

must not be bowed in sorrow, as it certainly would be if her lover were not made welcome.

Grandma Larkin sat before the open fireplace in which a great log was burning fiercely, her slippered feet resting upon a cricket which Tom had made. Daisy had covered it with a piece of bright red carpeting and tacked some blue fringe upon the edges. Grandpa Larkin, who had been a man-o' war's man in his younger days, called it the "Union Jack", and no one was allowed to use it but its proud owner.

Grandpa Larkin puffed at his pipe and in obedience to repeated obdurations, blew the smoke up the cavernous chimney because "Daisy can't bear so much tobacco smell and this is her house, not our'n."

There was a third member of the household, but he took no part in the conversation. He had been mute from birth, never having spoken an intelligible word. But he was not deaf, as the position of his head indicated, and his sharp, bright eyes showed that he was interested in what was going on.

The door that led to the little front garden with its maze of old-time flowers was opened and voices were heard. The mute member of the family listened intently.

"Come in, Tom."

"I'd like to, Daisy, but I can't. I'm hungry, and as uncle is away, there's a chance for some supper."

"Take supper with us."

"No, thank you; I'm coming to-morrow night, you know. Besides, I haven't got my costume yet. Have you yours?"

"All but my hat; but you can't see it till we're all ready to go. How do we go?"

"In Barnabas Briggs's big wagon. He has fitted it with seats, and we're to meet him at the old oak at ten o'clock. The ball is not on until eleven as the Hussars have a banquet and speeches from eight till then. Captain Sabreton's brother, the earl, is to be there."

"I wish I could see him."

"He'll be at the ball. Now, good-bye, Daisy, for a couple of hours."

There was a sound that brought the mute

member to his feet and his eyes snapped. The next moment he had his fore paws on his mistress's shoulders.

"Down, Toby, down! Why anyone would think you loved me."

"And so he does," said Grandma Larkin, "and dogs is more faithful lovers than men, which isn't saying anything against your grandfather."

"It's all in the woman," piped Grandpa Larkin, as he swallowed some smoke. "It's mighty hard to love some women, as they tell me and as I reads in books." Further speech was stopped by a fit of coughing.

"It's that horrid tobacco," said Daisy. "Better up the chimney than down your throat, Grandpa."

Toby was an obedient dog and minded the command to "down." He had been given to Daisy when in his puppydom, by the village tailor, and, in gratitude, had been named after the donor.

"Now, Grandma, I'll toast the bread, and make the tea, and cut the cheese, and get the

preserves, and we'll have our supper together, just as we always do, even if I have to eat another at Dunmoor. You won't be afraid if I stay all night, will you? Mrs. Merrily is going, and she has engaged a room at the Castle Inn. I'll be home early in the morning and bring Santa Claus with me."

"Is Tom going to be Santa Claus?" asked Grandma.

"Why, no. What an idea. He won't tell me and I won't tell him."

"That's right, Daisy," said Grandpa, "don't have no secrets between yer, 'cause secrets lead to lies, and lies to quarrels, and quarrels to—"

"Supper," cried Daisy, as she spread the white cloth on the little round table. Soon the crisp toast, the steaming tea, the yellow cheese, and the golden-red preserves were on the table, and all gathered about it, Toby waiting with eager eyes and expectant jaws for the tid-bits which he never failed to get.

There was no click-clack of the mill-wheel—the river ran quietly by the little cot and all was peace within.

CHAPTER X

THE TAILOR AND MISS JONES

Miss Jennie Jamieson Jones was a lady of uncertain age. You might have guessed how old she was, but Miss Jones never would have acknowledged the correctness of your estimate. She had been born a Jamieson. Her father was very poor and very proud. Her stepfather was Mr. Obed Jones, and he, by way of contrast, was very meek and very well-to-do. Miss Jones often said that she was Jennie by virtue of a christening; a Jamieson by the accident of birth, and a Jones by a streak of good luck.

Miss Jones had passed many years before her heart was touched by the tender passion, and then her affections had been bestowed upon what is sometimes called " the ninth part of a man "— a tailor. The fortunate gentleman was Mr. To-

bias—or, as he was generally called—Toby Whackers, the village tailor.

Miss Jones' passion was such a pure and enduring flame that it was not at all quenched by the storm of criticism thrown upon it by her so-called or would-be friends. Her acquaintance was sought, for she contributed largely to the social entertainments of the village. She was a pillar in the church, and could always be relied upon when a hand was extended in behalf of charity. She was so secure in her position that she did not ask, expect, or care for charity from others. She pursued the even tenor of her way, satisfied that she had made a good choice. She was not vain at heart, but there were moments when she felt that after she became Mrs. Tobias Whackers, she would find some way to repay in kind some of her merciless critics.

Both Miss Jones and Mr. Whackers had been invited to attend the masquerade ball at Dunmoor Barracks.

Miss Jones, conventional in some things, was very unconventional in others. One of her critics had referred to her and her future hus-

band as "Mr. Whackers and his goose." Miss Jones had appreciated the remark to a greater extent than did the one who uttered it, and she had determined, despite the mild remonstrances of Mr. Whackers, to appear at the masquerade dressed in the costume of a goose. She had invented it, and Mr. Whackers, with his sharp scissors and deft needle, had constructed it. He had told her that it would be completed late in the afternoon before Christmas day, and it was about six o'clock when Miss Jones arrived at Mr. Whackers's sartorial studio, with the intention of trying on her new costume. The studio included a front store, a trying-on room, and Mr. Whackers's chamber, which was at the rear.

The costume was a perfect fit, and Mr. Whackers, in the exuberance of his love, had called her his little goose, when there came a thundering knock at the front door of the shop.

"Who can it be?" cried Toby.

"Where can I go?" cried Miss Jones.

Mr. Whackers pointed towards the door of his chamber: "My love, I see no other way."

The knocking at the door was resumed.

"I don't care," cried Miss Jones; "you are mine and I am yours. They have said so much, they cannot say any more; besides, no one need know," and she vanished into the apartment.

Mr. Whackers did not use extreme haste in re-entering the front shop and unlocking the door. When he had done so he admitted Mr. Thomas Bright.

"Hello, Toby," cried Tom. "Have you got my costume ready?"

"Yes, here it is," replied Mr. Whackers. "It is all done up for you in this box." He seemed anxious to have his customer depart as soon as possible.

"Oh, I must try it on," said Tom. "If it doesn't fit me like a glove it won't do. To be sure, I gave you the measurements, but tailors do not always do as they ought to. They're responsible for a good many misfits, aren't they, Toby?"

"Oh yes, Mr. Bright, we sometimes make mistakes, but unlike some shopkeepers, we don't try to cover them up."

"Oh, you're a nice little fellow, Toby! How is Miss Jones? When did you see her last?"

Toby was not willing to answer the latter part of the question, so he replied evasively: "This morning some time."

"Why, I'm astonished," said Tom. "I saw her coming down the road a little while ago and I thought sure she must be on her way here."

"She may come in later," said Toby, not thinking it necessary to disclose the real situation. "Well, I hope, Mr. Bright, that the suit will fit you."

"Well, Toby, I'm going to know that before I leave here. I'm going inside to try it on," and he started for the middle room.

"Oh, no, no! You can't do that!" cried Mr. Whackers.

"Well, I don't see why not." He looked into the room: "It's empty—unless you have some person hid away there," and he gave Toby a nudge in the ribs that caused the little man to gasp for breath. "You just shut the door and we'll make the change in a very short time."

Tom's statement was true and but a few

minutes had elapsed before he was dressed in a suit of red from top to toe.

"How do I look?" asked Tom.

"Like the devil," said Mr. Whackers in a whisper, for he had been cautioned by Miss Jones not to use profanity under any circumstances.

"Nice fit; don't you think so, Toby?"

"Fine," said the tailor, for every true artist is pleased with his handiwork when it does him credit.

"Well, it's dark as pitch outside, and I can get back to the house without anyone seeing me. I'll put my other suit right in the box and take it along under my arm."

Mr. Whacker's was not unwilling to have his customer depart as soon as possible. He closed the shop door after Tom and was about to turn the key when the door was pushed violently open. Mr. Whacker's lost his balance and fell prone upon the floor.

"What the devil do you want?" he gasped, forgetful of Miss Jones's admonitions.

"Why," said Tom, "didn't I tell you that I

wanted a long cloak to wear over my costume? I can get home without freezing, but I can't ride to Dunmoor Barracks and back with this thin suit on."

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Whackers, "I forgot all about it. You stay here and I'll get it for you." He entered the middle room, closing the door behind him.

Miss Jones had heard the outer door close, and thinking that the customer, whoever it was, had gone, came from the chamber.

"Who was it, Toby?"

"Oh, that young fool, Tom Bright."

"Why didn't he go earlier?"

"I couldn't get rid of him any sooner. Begging your pardon, I was wishing the devil had him all the time he was here."

"Why, Toby," cried Miss Jones, "that isn't swearing, but it's very near to it."

The next moment she raised her hands high above her head, gave a sharp scream, and fell prostrate upon the floor.

Toby was at his wit's end. What had happened? What should he do? She had fainted!

Water! Water!! He turned to go into the front shop to get some, when before his astonished gaze stood the form of Tom Bright in the costume of Mephistopheles. He looked at Tom. He was the cause. There at his feet lay the body of his loved one, and that was the effect.

"Ha! Ha!!" said Tom. "I remember what you told me, Toby. You said that tailors sometimes made mistakes, but they never tried to cover them up. It seems to me that this is a mistake that you did try to cover up and failed in the attempt. Ah, Toby, you're a sly dog!" And he gave the little tailor another nudge in the ribs. "But we must bring the young lady to."

Tom took the water which Toby had brought and knelt beside the prostrate Miss Jones. He bathed her forehead, rubbed her hands, and soon she opened her eyes. She glanced about in search of Toby, but Tom managed to continually change his position so as to obstruct her vision. She was soon seated in a chair beside which Tom stood fanning her. She looked up at him:

"I have heard what you said to Toby, Mr. Bright."

"Now, don't worry about that, Miss Jones. We both came here on business; of course we both wish to keep our disguises from the knowledge of others. I think it was perfectly proper for you to hide. Now, when we get to the masquerade, if you won't tell anybody who I am, I'll keep your secret. I'm no gossip and nobody in the village shall know of our meeting here and its consequences. Good-bye, Miss Jones. We shall meet again. Now, Toby, give me my cloak."

The garment was produced. Tom gathered it about his tall form, and, with his box concealed beneath it, made his way homeward.

Toby made sure that the door was locked before he returned to the middle room.

"Toby," said Miss Jones, "you know I love you, but after to-night I think I shall always like the devil just a little bit."

CHAPTER XI

THE SQUIRE AND THE DRESSMAKER

"WHERE are you going, Boddley?" asked Mrs. Squire Coldfish in a querulous tone. "You wouldn't take me to the masquerade because, as you say you told Captain Sabreton, you always remained at home on Christmas eve."

"And so I would, Eunice, but it is a visit of charity and brotherly love that takes me from my warm fireside and loving spouse on such a cold night."

The Squire spoke often in public, and could be quite eloquent on occasion at home.

"Who's in trouble now?" asked Mrs. Coldfish, but without sympathy in her voice.

"Our worthy constable, Mr. Quinn. He has had a bad accident. Doctor Bunch will be there and we must to all we can for the poor fellow—

and think, while he is thus incapacitated, the village has no guardian."

Mrs. Coldfish sniffed. "He hasn't been much good since he broke his leg. It's a wonder he didn't break his neck."

"I am astonished, Eunice, at your unchristian levity." Feeling that sparks might produce a flame, he put on his mittens, grasped his gold-headed cane, and said: "I'll not be gone long. You may expect me home in an hour."

Constable Quinn was in an arm-chair, with his bandaged leg resting on a cricket, when Squire Coldfish arrived. Dr. Bunch had been and gone, giving his patient the pleasing information that he "would probably get out again in six weeks, if he used crutches."

"Glad to see you, Squire," said Mr. Quinn's sister Polly. "My brother is the most unfortunest critter in the world. He's always tumbling up or tumbling down. I can feed him all right, but I was never good on nussin'."

"Squire," said the victim, when his sister had left the room, "I want you to do something for me."

"That's what I came for, my friend. Nothing could have drawn me from my warm fireside and—"

"I wish I was out in the cold," broke in Mr. Quinn, "and what I wish you to do will give you a chance to enjoy it—but not as much as I would."

"And your wish is?"

"I want you to go to Mrs. Merrily and get some worm oil for me."

"Worm oil?" cried the astonished Squire. "Why, I thought you had an accident."

"So I did. Mrs. Merrily's husband hurt his hand and his fingers all stiffened up. Somebody told her to fry worms in lard and make a salve —and his fingers came out all straight. I want some for my knee."

"But she can't dig worms with the ground all frozen."

"She don't need to—she has some of the salve all made."

Squire Coldfish was not averse to calling upon the sprightly, well-preserved Mrs. Merrily, and he started off in his journey fully impressed

with the belief that his wife could not but commend his act of brotherly interest—although he knew that she disapproved of Mrs. Merrily because she dressed so extravagantly.

Mrs. Merrily was alone and took her visitor into her "trying-on" room. Weather and wife had been considered, and the Squire was just on the point of mentioning "worms" when the store bell rang violently. The Squire's first thought was that his wife had followed him—she had done so on more than one occasion. Mrs. Merrily was bringing her customer to the trying-on room—he must escape observation—some village gossip would tell his wife, and she would never believe the "worm" story. He opened a door—there was a closet—and when Mrs. Merrily entered the room, the Squire had disappeared.

"What can I do for you Miss Smiles?"

"I'm going to the masquerade and I want a costume."

"I'm sorry, but I haven't a thing that would fit you."

"I'm going to have a new silk dress," said

Sally, "but I suppose I'll have to go to Dunmoor for it."

Mrs. Merrily and Miss Phippen, the Dunmoor dressmaker, were not on speaking terms—with each other—but each had her opinion of the other's ability, which was expressed and duly transmitted.

"No need of that," said Mrs. Merrily. "Let me think!"

The Squire had found himself in a closet filled with petticoats, and gowns, and other articles of feminine apparel. What else could they be? He was nearly suffocated when Mrs. Merrily opened the door, having "thought" of a dress that "might" suit Miss Smiles.

Sally broke into a fit of uncontrollable laughter. As soon as she could speak, she cried: "Do you have the Squire for a model, Mrs. Merrily?"

The Squire was flabbergasted. Sally was all smiles, and Mrs. Merrily all frowns. How could he extricate himself? He was, at heart, an honest man, and he did the right thing.

"Well, Sally, I'll own up. I came to get some

worm oil for Mr. Quinn who has hurt his knee. I hadn't asked for it, and when I heard you—of course I didn't know it was you—I thought I'd go in the next room until you—I mean the customer—had gone."

"I'm one of the few persons who'd believe every word you say, Squire. I don't blame any gentleman for coming to see Mrs. Merrily— even the married ones—but it's mighty lucky it was me that saved you."

"Saved me?" cried the Squire.

"Yes, saved you. Supposing it had been your wife, whom I met a few minutes ago, you'd have died of suffocation—over-dressed, as it were—and Mrs. Merrily might have been held for murder. But I won't tell."

"Of course you won't, Sally," said the dressmaker. I'm sorry I haven't any oil for poor Mr. Quinn. My bicycle needed oiling and I used it. The machine's been wabbly ever since."

"It sort of worms its way along," remarked the Squire, who was a constant reader and great admirer of London Punch—the newspaper.

"Bravo!" cried Sally. "I've heard it before,

but it's good just the same. Now Madam," and she faced Mrs. Merrily, "do I get that costume?"

"Certainly," said the Squire; "anything you want, only have a mask and keep it tight over your mouth."

"How will this do?" asked Mrs. Merrily, as she brought from the closet a bright red dress, stockings, shoes, and hat. "Miss Vanderstyne wore it a year ago—she who was killed on the railroad—and her father brought it back and wouldn't pay for it."

"Take it," suggested the Squire.

"It's all I have that will fit you," said Mrs. Merrily, plaintively.

"Oh, just to oblige you I will; besides, I am not afraid of dead folks' clothes. Orphans don't get much else. Do it up. I'm in a frightful hurry. Then, Squire, you must see me home."

"Well, really, Sally," he began.

"It don't make no difference," said Sally. "I saved your life and you must beau me home. Come, you take this bundle."

The night was dark and Sally clung to the

Squire's arm. "Do you know, Mr. Coldfish, I thought you were the Old Nick when you came out of that closet."

"Don't mention it, Miss Smiles. Besides, I was not dressed in red."

"Neither is he when he goes a-visiting. The Good Book says he walks around like a wolf trying to eat lambs."

"I hate mutton," blurted the Squire.

The Squire lifted the cape of his coat to cover his face, for a woman was approaching. She passed by without noticing them.

"Who was it?" came in a whisper from behind the cape.

"I think it was Mrs. Coldfish," said the veracious Sally, who really had no idea who it was.

"So much the better," thought the Squire. "I'll be home first, and if she talks, I'll demand an explanation."

They were near the little red mill.

"Sally," began the Squire; then he hesitated. "Sally, I'm greatly indebted to you."

"How much?" was the quick query.

The Squire took out his leathern wallet, and

by the dim starlight at last found a coin. Sally felt the pressure in her hand.

"Good night, and a Merry Christmas, Miss Smiles."

"Same to you, Squire—and pleasant dreams —about worms," and she ran laughing into the house. She kept her hand clasped tightly until she was in her own room—then she looked at the glistening coin.

"It's all mine—every bit of it—and—and—and I'll make him pay for the costume too."

The Squire tiptoed upstairs. "Won't she be surprised when she comes home and finds me in bed?"

He lighted a candle and looked—his wife was fast asleep! He opened his wallet. "Only a crown, thank Fortune. I did think of making it a sovereign."

CHAPTER XII

THE CAPTAIN AND THE MILLINER

ALL the young, marriageable ladies in Dunmoor declared that Captain Horatio Sabreton was "a darling little fellow." He was short in stature, but trimly built. His hair, when dry, was red, but when saturated with bear's grease, was "a beautiful dark brown." His moustache, several shades lighter, was waxed to needle points. His feet were small, and his hands white, with tapering fingers. All in all, a man better suited for a boudoir than a battlefield. But appearances are often deceitful. Captain Sabreton was brave as a hungry lion and had shown his valor in real warfare, as the medal on his breast testified.

He was the third son of the Earl of Overland. Thomas, the eldest, was heir to title and estate; Reginald, the second son, had gone into the church with a handsome living, while a commission in the army and a small yearly allowance

had been Horatio's share of the patrimony. Thomas looked down on his youngest brother, but "Reggy" said that if he ever came into the title and the funds, he'd divide with "Holly."

The Dunmoor matrons, with human flowers which they wished to have transplanted into other people's gardens, regarded "Holly" Sabreton favorably. He was not wealthy, to be sure, and his two brothers were abominably healthy, but he was "in society" and could take his wife there. Dunmoor was only a garrison town and seldom visited by nobility, and only once, a hundred years before, by royalty.

But Holly seemed heart-proof against the Cupid's arrows shot at him by mammas and their progeny. His invulnerability was a mystery until its cause was discerned, and then the mystery became a mixture of surprise, and, it must be confessed, disgust. Why should Captain Sabreton ignore the charms of the Dunmoor belles and bestow his affections upon a woman at least ten years older than he was, plain surely, neat evidently, but—pshaw!—only a milliner, who kept a little shop in Middleton-on-Quick?

Miss Ruth Dunn Moor—the reason for his numerous visits to Middleton—was, in a way, also a mystery. She had been born in France and was never seen in Dunmoor until soon after the death of Lord Dunmoor, when she appeared and claimed to be his only niece, and heiress to the estates as against Ralph Crowders, a cousin of the late peer's, three times removed. A legal battle took place, but Miss Dunmoor could not prove her birthright, and her claim was set aside, with an injunction not to use the name "Dunmoor." With woman's persistency, she took the name Ruth Dunn Moore, and what she lost alphabetically she gained vocally.

Miss Dunn Moore closed her little shop door on Christmas eve at six o'clock. She was not going to Dunmoor Barracks to the masquerade. In some respects she was a timid little body, and she did not care to be stared at by the girls and lorgnetted by the mothers, and know she was being criticised behind her back—and even to her face.

But Holly had promised to come to see her, and it was just 6.10 by the ormolu clock on the

mantlepiece in her little parlor when his dogcart stopped at her door.

His present for her was a dainty brooch, with a receptacle in which she found a diminutive portrait of her lover. They made a pretty picture as they stood there—her plain face suffused with blushes, and her eyes bright with pleasure. He was in undress uniform, and looked every inch the gay cavalier—and "Boots," his big collie, wagged his black and orange tail to show his canine admiration.

But the joy was short-lived. A voice was heard in the shop: "Miss Dunn Moore! Are you there? I'm coming in. May I?"

Captain Sabreton caught at Boots's collar, dragged him behind a long pier glass, and Miss Ruth pushed an easy-chair before it, as the glass did not reach to the floor. Then she turned to greet Miss Daisy Dane.

"You've got company. Who is it—Captain Sabreton? I thought it was his dogcart. But where is Boots?"

The Captain had Boots's jaws in a firm grip to prevent a responsive bark.

Before Miss Ruth could invent a reply, for prevarication seemed absolutely necessary, Daisy went on: "I suppose he's gone over to the inn to wet his whistle. Strange that young men have to drink wine before they make love. But I've come for my Tyrolean hat. Is it ready?"

Miss Ruth was inwardly repentant for the falsehood she had not been obliged to tell, and grateful that the conversation had been turned to a business topic.

"Yes, it's done, and it's a beauty," and Miss Ruth brought it from the shop counter.

Daisy adjusted it jauntily over her golden hair, and was going to inspect it in the mirror when Miss Ruth caught her arm: "What's in your basket?"

"Oh, my boy's costume. I'm going to try it on here and have you give me the finishing touches. Grandpa and Grandma don't know any more about dress than my dog Toby does."

"Oh, no, you can't," cried Miss Ruth. "It isn't at all necessary. Somebody might come in."

"They can't if you lock the door. Go lock it

—that's a dear. I'll have my things all off in a minute."

Miss Dunn Moore gave a sigh—a long drawn one.

"The Captain won't mind waiting a few minutes when he comes back from the inn. Men are always good-natured when they get plenty to drink—but don't let him in until I'm all dressed —then I won't care very much. He won't ask me to dance—besides, Tom won't let me."

Miss Ruth locked the door, but lingered in the shop as though she were waiting for the Captain's return. "Acting a lie is less harmful than uttering one," she thought.

"I'm in it!" cried Daisy, and she was. Low shoes with buckles and clocked stockings; blue velvet knee breeches with silver embroidery; a fluffy lace shirt, a blue velvet jacket and a tall, Tyrolean hat with a long black feather.

"On the Grampian hills my father fed his flocks," cried Daisy, as she danced about the room. Then swinging her hat she gave a yodel that was too much for Boots's equanimity. He broke away from his master, gave a satisfied

yelp, and dashed after Daisy, full of the spirit of the occasion.

Daisy gave Miss Ruth a look that made the little milliner shake in her boots, while her blushes were supplanted by an ashen pallor. Daisy tiptoed to the mirror and looked behind it. There, doubled up, was Captain Holly. Daisy took him by the ear and led him forth.

"Are you a peeping Tom?" she asked, sternly.

"'Pon honor, no, Miss Daisy. I kept my eyes shut all the time."

"Did you hear anything?"

"I put my fingers in my ears."

"Let me see if the quicksilver is scratched off anywhere on that glass," and she made a careful examination. Then she began to laugh.

"Don't look so blue, Miss Ruth—and you, Captain, brace up. It's all my fault. I had no right to make myself so much at home. Pray forgive my thoughtlessness."

She began to put her discarded garments into the basket.

"Are you going home that way?" asked Miss Ruth.

"Why not? It's as dark as pitch, and I want to surprise Tom, because he won't tell me what he's going to wear."

"I'll drive you home," volunteered the gallant Captain.

"No, you won't. You'll stay right here with your own little girl," and before Miss Ruth could resist, Daisy caught her in her arms and kissed her on both cheeks, which were, at once, aflame, partly with surprise and partly from indignation.

"Good-bye, Captain! I'll see you later!" cried Daisy.

When Daisy had gone, with her basket under her arm, Miss Ruth took both the Captain's hands in hers and looked plaintively into his face.

"Did you peek, Holly?"

"Not once, my love."

Their lips met, and Boots wagged his particolored tail as a testimonial of the reconciliation.

CHAPTER XIII

PRINCE MEPHISTO

THE little red mill was as quiet as the grave. No, not quite so quiet, for occasionally rats could be heard scampering across the attic floor, and a succession of diminutive squeals indicated that a family of mice was ensconced beyond the pantry wall. A candle was burning on the kitchen table. Mr. Stubbs would have inveighed against it, but Sally did not like to come into the mill when it was shrouded in darkness, and had left the candle burning despite the possibility of receiving a severe scolding, and perhaps a more serious retribution, for Mr. Stubbs, in his fits of anger, had often used his stout oaken staff on the backs of his nephew, his servant, and even his only son.

The door was opened quietly, and a tall figure, enshrouded in a long black cloak, entered the

"The door was opened quietly, and a tall figure, enshrouded in a long black cloak, entered the room."

room. He dropped his cap upon the floor, and stood revealed—Mr. Thomas Bright as Prince Mephisto—clad in a suit of red from head to foot. The shoes which he wore were cloven, and the red hood, which fitted tightly to his head, had projecting points symbolical of horns. He put on a mask, with sharp nose and vengeful eyes, and looked to be the very Devil.

There was a rattle at the door. Someone was trying to lift the latch. Tom threw his cloak into the pantry and ran behind the tall, eight-day clock which stood in a corner of the room.

He had no sooner done so than Sally entered with a bundle under her arm. She started towards the table, intending to take the candle and go to her room, but as she extended her hand, Tom gave a deep groan.

Sally was terrified. She screamed: "'Evans! Oh, 'Evans!" And hugging her bundle closely with both arms, rushed out of the room.

Tom stepped from behind the old clock, took off his mask and laughed diabolically.

"Sally would have the St. Vitus dance if she saw me in this rig. I don't believe she would

know me. I think this will do for the masquerade. Everybody will say it is a devilish good costume. I hope Daisy will like it. Ah! There's Sally singing to keep her courage up. I will scare her out of a year's growth."

He put on his mask, took some toys and a long feather from a shelf, and hid again behind the clock.

Sally, who had put on the costume which Mrs. Merrily had provided, and which Squire Coldfish had paid for once and would perhaps have to pay for again, entered the room singing in a loud voice: "I don't care for nobody, and nobody cares for me."

"Well, I suppose I must let Tom out, so that he can go to the masquerade with Daisy. She's a pretty girl. They'll make a handsome couple —so will Johnnie and me. I have a hold on the old Stubbs, because I kept my eyes open, and that improves my chances of getting the young one."

Tom gave another deep groan.

"What's that?" cried Sally.

There was another groan.

"'Evans! Oh, 'Evans! Ghosts!"

Sally shook with fear, and then remembering woman's most potent weapon, gave a shrill scream.

Tom, still behind the clock, said in his deepest tones: "Sarah Ann Smiles!"

"Ough!" Sally shuddered. "Old Nick is calling for me." She crouched in a corner and covered her face with her dress.

Tom tiptoed from behind the clock and tickled her ear with the feather.

Sally slapped her face and exclaimed: "Skeeters!"

At the same moment Tom dropped a handful of toys and some blocks of wood on Sally's head. She jumped to her feet, gave another loud scream, and ran to a corner of the room. Then, impelled by a curiosity which she could not overcome, she turned and saw Tom, who struck an attitude befitting his Satanic costume.

Sally, terrified, fell on her knees. "Oh, I say, good Mr. Devil, don't hurt little Sally, and she won't be wicked any more."

Tom pointed his finger at her and said,

sternly: "It is time for you to reform, Miss Sarah Ann Smiles! Such goings on with Mr. Stubbs!"

Sally thought to herself: "He knows all about it. Oh, you good Mr. Devil," she implored; "you're a nice, pretty Devil. I didn't mean any harm. Oh, you nice Mr. Satan, I did want a new silk dress so much, and a kiss was awful cheap for it. Don't you think so?"

Tom advanced towards her, shaking his finger in a portentous manner.

"Oh, good Mr. Devil, I will tell everything. Mr. Stubbs is going to give me a new silk bonnet too."

"Ho, ho!" cried Tom. "So the father is kissing you as well as the son! You will never wear that new silk bonnet or that new silk dress. You must come with me!" As he spoke he grasped Sally by the arm.

"Oh, don't, good Mr. Devil. I ain't ready. My trunk ain't packed, and I have the Christmas dinner to get, and I must say good-bye to Johnnie."

Tom dragged Sally about the room, she

screaming wildly. Then he released her and she fell face downward on the floor.

Tom gave a loud laugh, lifted his mask, and leaned over her. "Sally! I say, Sally! Don't you know me?"

Sally looked up and her face was a picture of disgust.

Tom pointed downwards with his finger. "So you thought I was the—?"

Sallie jumped up, laughing boisterously. "Didn't I fool you nice, Tom?"

"Why, you didn't know who it was."

"Of course I did, Tom."

"No, you didn't either; if you had, you wouldn't have confessed all your little secrets to me."

"Why, of course I knew it was you, Tom, and what I told you was all a joke."

"Do you mean that you made it all up, Sally?"

"Yes, it was all made up—just as you are."

"I'm devilish well made up. Don't you think so, Sally? Don't I look like the gent down below?"

"I hope he isn't any worse looking."

"Is that a compliment? How do I look, anyway?" As Tom asked the question he pirouetted about the room.

"You look just splendid, Tom. I hope Daisy won't keep you waiting. But how did you get out?"

"Oh, I made myself a key, and I have one for the outside door too. After all, you're a pretty nice girl, Sally."

"Do you think so? Mr. Stubbs says I shall soon be a friend of the family."

"Uncle Stubbs will never let Johnnie marry you."

"That's for Johnnie to decide. He's a man, ain't he? He's twenty-one, anyhow."

Tom hesitated: "Well, yes, he has one qualification of manhood."

"What's that?"

"Why, he's twenty-one. Why don't you go away, then if Johnnie is true, he'll follow you."

"Supposing I asked you, Tom, why you didn't go away?"

"I'm staying to get my rights. Somebody's

got my money and I'm going to find out who it is."

"Well, I'm staying to get my man—and all the money, one of these days. I don't think it will be such a bad match; do you, Tom?"

"He's a little fool. You're too good for him, Sally."

"Well, I think a little fool with lots of money is better than a smart young man like you, Tom, without a shilling to his name. I'm satisfied. My market's made. I'm going to marry Johnnie Stubbs."

"Well, Sally, I'm glad you're going to get lots of money with him. Why doesn't Daisy come? Girls are always late. I will give the signal; perhaps she is there waiting. She wouldn't come in if she thought that Uncle Stubbs and your intended were here."

Tom held the candle before the window and passed it back and forth. He listened. There was a sound of clapping of hands.

"She sees it. She'll be here in a minute."

Tom opened the door and he and Sally stood expectantly. Daisy entered. Upon her head

was the peaked Tyrolean hat; a long, gray cloak, which reached to the floor, encircled her. She threw it off and stood revealed in the costume of a Tyrolean peasant boy.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SECRET OUT

Daisy could not help laughing, for both Tom and Sally looked astonished.

"Oh, Tom, it's as dark as pitch out-doors, but everything looks bright and smiling in here."

"Oh, yes," said Tom; "everybody who comes here is welcomed by bright smiles."

Daisy looked Tom over from head to foot. "I should judge by your costume that you're going to play the Devil to-night."

Tom put on his mask and struck an attitude.

"You look just like him."

"Are you pleased with my costume, Daisy?" asked Tom.

"Oh, it's capital in one respect—I shall have no cause to be jealous. I shall have you all to myself."

"I don't think you like my costume very well, Daisy, or you wouldn't give such a selfish reason."

"Selfish, Tom? Do you call it selfish to take up with Old Nick when there will be princes, and kings, and knights there in profusion?" she pouted, and looked prettier than ever when she did it.

By that time Sally had become convinced of the truth of the old saying: Two's company; three's a crowd."

"I'll be back in a minute," she said, as she left the room.

Tom surveyed Daisy critically, and there was no tone of appreciation in his voice when he spoke: "I have been looking at your dress, Daisy. No doubt you think you look perfectly lovely."

"Well, I ought to, Tom, when you look so diabolical."

"You ought to have cavalry boots to go with those," and he pointed to the knee breeches. "They ought to come up high, too."

"Why, how foolish, Tom. Tyrolean boys al-

ways wear low shoes with buckles and clocked stockings."

Tom spoke angrily: "Daisy, I don't like them."

"Don't like what, Tom?"

"Why, those—those breeches."

"I know why you don't like them. It isn't because they're short, but because they're not long enough."

"Well, I don't like them, Daisy, that's all. They remind me of Johnnie Stubbs's. I thought you were going to wear a girl's pretty costume to match with mine. If you go in that—I mean those—they'll take us for the Devil and his lackey."

Daisy had a temper of her own and it began to rise. "There's nothing particularly handsome about your costume, Tom. I'm sure I have no wish to be seen dancing with the devil, even at a masquerade."

Sally looked in at the door: "Don't you want something to eat, Tom? I've warmed up some soup. It will be almost morning before you get supper at the masquerade."

Tom, who was in a sullen mood, answered: "I don't want any supper, and what's more, I'm not going to the masquerade."

Sally was astonished to hear Tom say that he was not hungry, but when he said that he was not going to the masquerade, her eyes seemed ready to leave their sockets, as she stood with wide-open mouth. At last she exclaimed: "Not going, Tom! Why not?"

Tom did not reply.

"Why, would you believe it, Sally, he's not going just because I got this for my costume. He doesn't like these," and she pointed to the knee breeches.

Tom growled out: "You look horrible."

Daisy was quick at repartee: "Well, you look like the devil in your costume, anyway."

Sally interposed a query: "Why, what did you expect her to wear, Tom?"

"Why, a pretty girl's dress, of course."

Sally had an idea: "Say, Daisy, if I find you a pretty girl's dress—no, I mean a girl's pretty dress—to wear, will you let me have the boy's costume? I want to go to the masquerade, but

I just hate this thing," and she gave her dress a spiteful swish. "Mrs. Merrily said it was all she had, but she had something else in the closet—"

"You can have it and welcome, Sally," said Tom.

Daisy was not so willing: "I have something to say about that. I chose this costume and I am going to wear it."

Tom ignored her declaration, and turning to Sally asked: "Where is the dress you speak of?"

"Oh, Tom, it's such a funny story! You know Mr. Stubbs always keeps that closet locked," and she pointed towards the door. "Well he's got a big, life-sized doll in there, and she's just dressed elegantly. This afternoon I caught Mr. Stubbs just as he was putting her back in the closet. Do you know, he thought that I thought that he thought that I thought he had a live girl locked up in there. Oh, Daisy, she's just lovely."

"I'd like to have a look at her," said Tom. "She may be larger or smaller than Daisy; then, too, the door may be locked."

"Oh, that's all right," said Sally; "I have a key."

Tom entered the closet and soon returned drawing the platform upon which stood the dummy doll. "Seems about your size."

Sally clapped her hands: "And as I live she looks just like Daisy."

"Uncle Stubbs is a man of taste," said Tom. "He took the prettiest girl in the village for his model."

It takes an experienced woman of the world to withstand flattery, and Daisy was but a simple village maiden.

"Oh, Tom," she cried, "the Old Nick was always a flatterer."

"Yes," said Tom, "and always succeeded. You remember Eve?"

Sally stroked the doll's silk dress and carefully examined the lace with which it was trimmed: "Oh, I say, don't you think she is superbly elegant? And such nice clothes! How about that trade, Daisy? Is it all right?"

Daisy nodded. "Yes, I'm satisfied."

Tom felt as though an apology was needed:

"You know, Daisy, I'm real sorry that I was ugly to you."

Daisy was an honest little girl, so she replied: "Well, I'm real glad of it, Tom, for now I shall have the most beautiful dress at the masquerade."

"Let's get to work," said Sally. "We have to undress the doll; then Daisy's got to undress and put on this dress; then I have to put on Daisy's costume, and there's lots to be done."

Tom thought this suggestion was a good one, and Sally and he began to undress the doll, but Daisy interposed: "Tom, don't you think it would be more proper for you to take her into the closet and let me finish undressing her?"

"Well, I really think you could do as well without me; I'm inexperienced, and while you're making your toilet, I'll get some of that soup."

Tom drew the platform back into the closet. Daisy followed him. He soon returned and closed the door, and started in search of the soup, for now that the matter was settled in a satisfactory manner, he actually felt hungry.

CHAPTER XV

FROM BOY TO GIRL

Tom was not allowed to enjoy his meal undisturbed; in fact, he had no sooner taken the bowl into his hand than Daisy's voice was heard. She had left the closet and had come to the door of the room in which Tom was sitting.

"Oh, Tom, it's so horrid dark in that closet, I must have a light."

"Why, of course, Daisy. A lady cannot dress in the dark," and taking a candle from the mantelpiece, he lighted it, and went as far as the closet door with her.

Just as Daisy entered the closet, there came a flash of lightning, followed by a loud peal of thunder.

"We're going to have a hard night. We'll get wet going to the masquerade. But one good

thing, Uncle Stubbs and Johnnie won't come home till morning. Oh, I forgot to lock the door."

Tom started to leave the room, when Daisy re-appeared at the closet door: "Oh, Tom, there's a mouse in here, and you know I'm so afraid of them. Oh, it makes me c-r-a-w-l. Ugh!"

"Nonsense, Daisy! Hurry up! Go in!" He pushed her into the closet and closed the door. He felt the pangs of hunger, but before he reached the door of the room where his soup was awaiting him, Daisy grasped him by the arm.

"Tom, dear, there's a big mouse in that dress, and I don't dare to touch it. You must come and kill it."

Tom grasped her around the waist and carried her into the closet. The storm increased in violence. Loud raps were heard upon the outside door.

Sally entered the kitchen, ran about the room, and looked behind the clock and in the pantry: "Where's Tom? Where's the girl?"

Sounds came from the closet. Tom was try-

ing to kill the mouse. Sally ran to the closet door and rapped upon it.

"Tom! Tom!! Tom!!!" In a loud whisper.

Tom opened the door hastily and ran against Sally, who gave utterance to a stifled "Oh!"

"What's the matter, Sally?"

"Both the Stubbs's have come home. Don't you hear them at the door?"

Mr. Stubbs pounded upon the door with his heavy oaken staff.

"I say, Tom, she must get out of here, or there'll be a row."

"Who must get out—the doll?"

"No, the girl. She must cut and run."

Tom opened the closet door: "Daisy, come out! Quick."

"I can't!"

"But you must, Daisy! Come!"

"I won't!"

"But you must come! Why can't you come?"

"Of course I can't; I'm all undressed."

"Open the door, Daisy. I must speak to you."

"Don't you dare come in here!"

Tom pulled at the door and succeeded in opening it a short distance. "Daisy, Uncle Stubbs has come home and we're in for it. If he comes to the closet, you must play that you're the doll, and fool the old man. It's your only chance."

"All right, Tom; I'll take the chance."

"Now, Sally," said Tom, "what's to become of me?"

"You must hide. Get under the table. No, your legs are too long. Get in the big chest. No, you would suffocate. Get inside the clock. No, there isn't room, unless you take the place of the pendulum. Oh, Tom, you'll have to go up chimney."

Tom was at his wit's end. "Sally, lock the closet door and hide the key. Here's the door key. Although Old Nick lives down below, this time Old Nick will upward go."

Tom crawled up into the chimney. Sally ran and locked the closet door and put the key in her pocket. The pounding on the outside door now became so great that it seemed as though Mr. Stubbs had determined to force his way in.

Sally approached the outside door. Raising her voice so that Mr. Stubbs could hear, she cried: "Coming! Coming!! You're in a great hurry, it seems to me. Can't you give a poor girl time to get her eyes open?"

She unlocked the door and opened it. Father and son rushed into the room. Mr. Stubbs threw his hat in one corner, his coat in another, and, pulling off his boots, threw them at Sally, who managed to dodge them and brought him his slippers.

"Sally, run upstairs to my room and get my little blue trunk, and remember to remember to handle it carefully, or it'll explode and blow you to pieces."

Sally ran to do his bidding.

The old man raised his arms heavenward: "With what fond anticipation have I looked forward to this night! The almanac says it will be tempestuously terrible, and it is terribly tempestuous! My son, hear the wind howl."

"I feel like howling too," said Johnnie. "We lost a good supper, Dad."

Mr. Stubbs spoke in a mysterious and solemn

way: "John B. Stubbs, Junior, namesake of the noble father who stands before you, listen!"

The storm had increased in intensity.

"The rain pours, the snow blows, the hail rattles, the thunder roars, the lightning flashes, and the wind howls, howls, howls! Don't you hear it?"

Johnnie's appearance indicated that he not only heard it, but that he was much affected by the situation. He managed to blurt out: "I ain't deaf. I wish I was."

The old man continued: "All the authorities agree that such an arcana of auditory agitation is admirably adapted to the anthropological assimilation, and I am confidently corroborated in my belief that the auspicious, propitious, ambitious, and delicious hour has come when—"

Johnnie shook his head and said in an undertone: "It becomes my duty to send for an expert." The thought then came to Johnnie that perhaps his father was already a maniac, and his fears were shown in his face.

His father noticed the expression, and said, with pathos: "My son, do not look at me with

such an air of anxious interrogation. If there is a sorrow eating into your young heart, a fact which the suppressed look of agony on your young face seems to indicate, do not suffer sadly and alone, but confide in your father." Full of parental affection, he embraced Johnnie, who struggled to free himself.

"Dad, I've long had a big suspicion that you were driving things too fast; got too much steam on. You need a doctor."

His father looked at him inquiringly: "Sick! Me sick! Where?"

Johnnie tapped his forehead: "I'm afraid you're touched right here."

"Touched!" cried the old man. "Touched! With what? Do you see any signs of impending decay on this classic brow?"

"Oh, Dad, you run on so queer sometimes. You know first your hair fell out, then your teeth fell out, and I've been afraid that next the top of your head would fall in."

The old man drew himself up proudly: "Ah, this is my reward for burning the midnight oil and digging deep into the mysteries of science!

Great Heavens! Why do men of genius have such fools for sons?"

Johnnie felt that his impressions were right. He tapped his own head and glanced at his father furtively. "He was wound up well, but he must run down."

His father came towards him with a smile on his face: "Come here, my darling boy!"

Johnnie advanced and then recoiled, for his father had assumed a tragic attitude.

"Have you the nerve, Johnnie, to cast your eyes upon the greatest creation since the days of Adam and Eve?"

Johnnie hesitated before replying, and felt his biceps muscle: "I have considerable nerve, Dad."

His father grasped his arm and said in a loud whisper: "Then listen, John Junior, with all your ears. I, your father, John B. Stubbs, manufacturer of toys to her Majesty the Queen, have made a girl—"

"A girl? A real, live girl?" Johnnie's bulging eyes betrayed his astonishment. "Where is she?"

Mr. Stubbs pointed: "In that closet."

At that moment Sally entered with a little blue trunk.

Mr. Stubbs turned upon her savagely: "Put it down! Go to bed! Get out!"

Sally left the room hastily.

Mr. Stubbs turned to his son: "Johnnie, you will soon gaze upon a lovely creature."

Johnnie had been thinking. He turned to his father with a sad expression upon his face. "A real girl in there? That doesn't speak well for you, Dad. Oh! That I should live to see this day! The family honor is compromised!"

Mr. Stubbs went to the door of the closet and found it locked. He felt in all his pockets for the key, but could not find it. Exasperated beyond measure, he threw himself against the door and forced it open. He entered the closet and soon returned, both hands grasping the handle of the platform upon which stood "the doll."

Daisy had considerable difficulty in maintaining her equlibrium when they lifted her from the platform, but her motions were so natural that they did not attract any particular atten-

"Balance her, Dad."

tion on the part of Mr. Stubbs, who had turned and faced her. To add to the illusion, Daisy pretended to lose her balance. Mr. Stubbs and Johnnie sprang forward to prevent her from falling.

"Balance her, Dad. Find her centre of gravity."

They finally succeeded in having her assume an erect posture. Mr. Stubbs put the platform back in the closet. While he was engaged in doing this, Johnnie regarded Daisy from all points of view. Mr. Stubbs emerged from the closet and contemplated his handiwork.

"There, Johnnie, is my wonderful doll." He then assumed a tragical attitude. "Have I worked all these years in vain, or has the time come when by the judicious unison of magico-electrico formulas, I shall give life—yes, life—to my marvellous mechanism."

Johnnie placed both hands upon his forehead: "Insane, and, Oh, Heavens! Perhaps it's hereditary."

CHAPTER XVI

A WEIRD INCANTATION

"WELL, Johnnie, what do you think of her?"

"It's a female."

"Girls generally are."

Daisy made a mental comment: "What a homely boy! What a mouth!"

"She's well got up, Dad; makes a good show."

"I sent the measures to Lunnon and had her clothes made there."

Daisy thought: I'm right in the style then."

"We'll depend upon magic first, Johnnie. I'll get the fireworks ready, and if magic fails, we'll try the electrical machine."

Daisy shivered: "What's coming next? They're going to blow me up."

Mr. Stubbs went to the little blue trunk and

took out some books and a pair of cymbals and put them on the table. He went back to the trunk and took out some red and blue Bengal lights and a long metalic wand. Then he sat down by the table and began to look over the book.

Johnnie improved the opportunity to make a particular examination of Daisy. He pulled her hair, lifted her arm and let it fall again, made faces at her, put his fingers in her ears, and, to complete his atrocity, tickled her face with a feather. Through it all Daisy remained imperturbable.

"I don't think much of her, Dad; she's a dummy."

Daisy's inward thought was: "He's worse than mice."

Mr. Stubbs arose with the open book in his hand: "Don't be impatient, my boy. She is beautiful as she is now."

Daisy could not repress a scftly whispered: "Thank you."

"But, Johnnie, when she becomes a living creature, you will lose your heart in a moment.

I have always intended that she should become your wife."

Tom, who was crouching up in the wide, open fireplace, heard Mr. Stubbs's declaration as to his matrimonial intentions as regarded Daisy, and said audibly: "If she does, there'll be a widow in the family very soon."

"Did you hear, Dad?" cried Johnnie. "The wind's blowing down the chimney."

But Mr. Stubbs was too intent upon reading his book of magic to notice his son's remarks, or even pay attention to the fearful storm that was raging.

"My son, listen to this. The instructions in this book are marked by perspicuous perspicacity. I will read some of it to you. 'The person who would accomplish a wonderful and occult transmigration—'"

Upon hearing this Johnnie opened his mouth wide in astonishment, and stared at his father, who continued: "'—this beautiful and enchanting metamorphosis—'"

This word was too much for Johnnie, and he increased the distance between himself and his

father, who went on: "'—this weird and witching work of conjuration, this mystical materialization of a mutely morbid mortal—'"

Johnnie backed into a corner of the room.

"'—must have—must have—plenty of light and heat in the room.'"

John Junior looked at Daisy: "Wonder if that old stiff-backed dummy understands that!"

Mr. Stubbs continued his reading: "'The scientific necromancer having secured the proper optical, thaumaturgical, thermometrical, barometrical, and climatological influences, must then rely upon the Black Art or astrological magic which supplies the rules of life, and, if necessary, upon electricity, which is life itself.'"

"That's too deep for me, Dad."

Mr. Stubbs did not notice Johnnie's remark, but continued reading: "'From the Sorcerer's Fonetic Speller and Automatic Pronouncing Dictionary, can be learned the modern pronunciation of the potent cabalistic words.'"

He threw down the book and grasped the cymbals which lay on the table: "I have got those down fine. Zwing! He gave the cymbals a

loud clash. Zwang! The cymbals were clashed a second time. Zwong! The cymbals were banged together a third time and the reverberations filled the room.

Daisy felt a cold chill running down her spine: "Ough!"

"What did you say, Johnnie?"

"Nothing, Dad. It must have been the echo."

"Now we will light up," said Mr. Stubbs.

One of the Bengal lights was placed upon the table and lighted.

"Now, Johnnie, we must begin at the beginning. We can animate her by sections. We can try an arm, a leg, a hand, or even her tongue."

"Let's do that first, Dad. It will be fun to hear her tongue wag."

"No, we'll save the tongue until the last. We'll get enough of that anyway."

Daisy remarked in a low tone: "It's having a long vacation."

"What did you say, Johnnie? I heard you speak."

"I didn't say nothing to nobody no time nuther."

"Stop thinking out loud then."

"I say, Dad, blow up one of her lungs and see how that will work."

"No, we will begin with her right hand. Now, you stand here and see if you detect the slightest motion. I will put a stick in her hand."

Mr. Stubbs took a book in one hand and the wand in the other. Finding that both his hands were occupied, he said to Johnnie: "Put that stick in her hand and keep your eye on it."

"I always do," said Johnnie.

Mr. Stubbs did not notice his remark but continued his reading: "'To secure the first motion, make a diagonal pass across the subject with one of Wallenstein's patent wands.'" As he uttered the words, he passed the wand diagonally in front of Daisy.

Johnnie was so interested that he bent over so as to get a better view.

Mr. Stubbs continued: "'—repeating, at the same time, the three cabalistic words Zwing! Zwang!! Zwong!!!'"

As Mr. Stubbs repeated the word "Zwing,"

Daisy brought her right hand up with as much force as she could command, and the stick struck Johnnie under the chin. Johnnie gave a loud yell, and, grasping his chin with both hands, quickly got out of range of the weapon.

Daisy held her arm out straight from the shoulder. Mr. Stubbs was immensely pleased. At the word "Zwang," Daisy brought the stick before her in the position of "Present Arms." As Mr. Stubbs uttered the word "Zwong," she brought the stick down upon his head with such force that he fell to the floor.

Grasping his book of magic, he examined page after page intently. "I cannot find any explanation of such a backhanded proceeding."

"It moved, didn't it, Dad?"

"Yes, slightly. My diagnosis is, that's merely a premonitory symptom; a sample of what's to come."

"Glad you're expecting it," said Daisy in a low voice.

Johnnie still fondled his chin: "If that's what you call a sample symptom, Dad, one's enough."

"Yes, my son, that's a symple samptom. It seems to me I remember remembering something about it in this book."

Mr. Stubbs and his son reclined upon the floor looking at the book of magic. Daisy faced about, took three steps forward, then turning, took three more steps, resuming her original position.

Johnnie stared: "Look, Dad, look!"

"That's all right, Johnnie. That's another symptom."

"Well, if it is, Dad, I'm going to look out and not get another sample."

Mr. Stubbs took Daisy in his arms, brought her near to the book of magic, and balanced her again. As he did so, Daisy puckered up her mouth and smiled at him.

"Look out, Dad! That's another symptom! You'll get the sample!"

"Come, come, boy! Stop your nonsense! This is serious business."

"You'll find it is," said Daisy.

Mr. Stubbs grasped Johnnie by the shoulder: "Shut up! Don't answer me back again. My

thermometer is down to fifty. It's too cold here. Go light the fire, Johnnie. We may need some hot water."

"I'll get you into hot water," said Daisy.

Mr. Stubbs cuffed his son vigorously: "Keep your tongue still! Not another word! Go start up the fire."

"Oh, Gracious!" said Daisy. "If they light the fire, they'll make bacon of poor Tom."

Mr. Stubbs turned and gave Johnnie a sharp blow with the wand: "Muttering again, eh? I'll learn you to sauce your father!"

Johnnie arranged the wood in the fireplace and scratched a match. He held it too long in his fingers and burned them.

Mr. Stubbs took up the book of magic and approached Daisy, who kicked it out of his hand. At that moment Mr. Stubbs felt a strong inclination to sneeze, and he gratified it. Tom dropped down the chimney and shook his red leg in Johnnie's face. The young hopeful gave a loud yell, scrambled to his feet and ran to his father.

"What's the matter, Johnnie?"

"Big red leg came down the chimney! Reached clear across the room!"

"Don't be a fool, Johnnie. It was the light from the fire, of course."

Mr. Stubbs started to go towards the fireplace when Daisy yawned, making a loud noise. He came back and looked at her ruefully.

"I don't like that. It's a bad sign. Her nerves are unstrung. She needs a tonic. Electricity is the best tonic. I'll get the machine. You stay here, Johnnie, and keep an eye on her."

"Don't leave me here alone with her, Dad; please don't."

"Well, come along, you coward. It won't take us a minute anyway."

Mr. Stubbs, followed by Johnnie, entered the closet from which the doll had been taken.

Daisy ran to the fireplace: "Mr. Satan, are you comfortable up there?"

Tom replied: "It's getting hot. I shall have to drop soon."

Sally looked in at the door: "Where's Tom?"

Daisy pointed up chimney: "Up there. Run,

Sally, and get some water to put the fire out. Too late! They're coming."

Sally closed the door softly, and when Mr. Stubbs and his son returned with the electrical machine, Daisy was standing in the same place where they had left her.

"Now, Johnnie, put out the lights, for the room must be dark. The fire will give us all the light we need."

Daisy made a gesture of despair.

"Johnnie, go and call Sally. We shall need her help."

Johnnie was glad to escape and he left the room calling loudly: "Sally! Sally!! Sally!!!"

Mr. Stubbs soliloquized: "She knows a little, so I might as well let her know all. If she wants to tell now, I'm satisfied. I can save the price of the new dress and bonnet."

Johnnie came back, dragging Sally after him.

"Sally," said Mr. Stubbs, "this young lady has paralysis, and her friends sent her to me so that she could secure the benefit of my electrical treatment."

Sally's thought was: "What a terrible liar old Stubbs is!"

Mr. Stubbs said, sharply: "Sally, turn the crank."

Sally grasped Mr. Stubbs and whirled him about so quickly that he nearly lost his balance.

"What are you about?" he cried, angrily.

"Turning the crank," said Sally, with a smileless face. "Just what you told me to do."

Sally grasped the handle and began turning it vigorously.

"No, no! Wait until I give you the order. When you hear the word 'ready,' turn the crank as fast as you can."

"Of course."

"Now, my son, the revolving disk generates the galvano-electrico current. That passes through this flexible tubing and collects in these handles, one of which is positive and the other negative. The handles are placed in the hands of the subject. The electric sparks will pass through her body, and her health will be greatly improved. Am I lucid?"

"A very simple sample, Dad. I'm glad electric sparks ain't going through me."

"Now, Johnnie, you put the handles—one in

each of her hands." He passed the handles to Johnnie. "Are you ready, Sally?"

"Of course. Did you say 'ready,' Mr. Stubbs?"

Johnnie dropped the handles.

"No, wait a minute. I want to see how long the current must be kept on."

Mr. Stubbs looked in the book and Johnnie picked up the handles again.

"Ah, here it is! 'When all is prepared, give the signal to the operator in a loud voice READY, and then count slowly: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, and the—'"

When Sally heard Mr. Stubbs say 'ready,' she began turning the crank, giving the full effect to Johnnie, who danced and writhed, being unable to let go of the handles. When Mr. Stubbs finished counting, he turned and saw his son's condition. With his fists clenched, he rushed at Sally.

"What are you up to? Why didn't you wait until I said 'ready'?"

"You did say it."

"No, I didn't."

Johnnie came to Sally's aid: "Yes, you did say it. I heard you."

Mr. Stubbs rubbed his forehead: "I can't remember to remember having said it."

"Well, you did say it," cried Sally.

"Yes, you did; you know you did," supplemented Johnnie.

"Well, I didn't mean it, Johnnie. I didn't intend it for you."

"Well I got it."

"We'll try again. I won't make any mistake this time."

"No, Dad. One simple sample's enough. You give her the handles and I'll do the counting. It's my turn now."

Mr. Stubbs picked up the handles: "Now, Sally, don't be in a hurry. Wait until you hear the signal."

Johnnie called out: "Ready!"

Sally did not see any need for waiting after hearing the signal, and grasping the handle with both hands, gave the machine a tremenduous impetus.

Johnnie counted: "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten."

Mr. Stubbs found himself in the same predicament as he had unintentionally placed his son. He was unable to let go of the handles. He kicked and danced up and down. His face was distorted.

When Johnnie saw what had happened, his knees quaked. Sally screamed and started to run from the room. Johnnie's feet took him towards the fireplace.

As soon as Mr. Stubbs got free, he yelled: "The Devil take you!"

Tom dropped down the chimney again and shook his red leg at Johnnie. His father turned quickly and saw the apparition.

"Now I have gone and done it, Johnnie. The devil is coming."

Tom's both legs appeared in sight; then his body, and finally his head. He stood erect and struck an attitude. Mr. Stubbs and his son lay prone upon the floor and gazed at his Satanic majesty.

Tom approached them and kicked Johnnie

with his foot. Mr. Stubbs was so frightened that he crossed the room and dived head foremost under the table. Johnnie, seeing that he was left alone, gave a loud yell, and walked on his knees towards Tom.

Prince Mephisto pointed his finger at him, and Johnnie fell backwards. Tom took him by the ear with one hand and, grasping Mr. Stubbs's leg with the other, dragged him from under the table. Mr. Stubbs and Johnnie knelt, with their hands clasped, in an attitude of supplication.

Raising his hand, Tom said, in sepulchral tones:

> "Good Mr. Bull, your summons I did hear,
> Did quick respond, and stand before you here.
> What is your wish? If you the price will pay,
> It shall be done, for I can find a way."

Johnnie sniffled: "Oh, good Mr. Devil, be easy on a poor orphan."

"I never called on you," said Mr. Stubbs. "You've got in the wrong house."

Prince Mephisto again spoke:

> "Prevaricate no more. I know your thought,
> Can understand why for my aid you sought.
> Am I not right? You'd make your son a bride,
> That maiden there (He pointed to Daisy) you wish electrified."

"It's all Dad's fault, Mr. Devil. I don't want her. I have a girl."

"Shut up, Johnnie! Don't be so familiar with his majesty."

"Mr. Stubbs," said Tom, "do you wish her to live, or have you been trifling with me?"

"Yes, Mr. Devil, just a little bit of life."

Johnnie added: "Just a little bit, Mr. Devil, but not too much."

"Your wish shall be gratified," said Tom. "I give you my word. Yes, she shall live."

CHAPTER XVII

THE VITAL SPARK

Mr. Stubbs and his son were in a state of abject subjection. The Devil dominated everything, and they awaited his next movement with feelings of irrepressible fear and unsatisfied curiosity.

Tom did not keep them waiting for the *dénouement.* He took Daisy's hand in his and looked into her bright, but apparently sightless, eyes. Then he spoke:

"There is no way but this to wake a sleeping angel. I take her hand in mine, and I press a kiss upon her lips. You see, she opens her eyes. Now, as the vital spark permeates her body, she shakes and shivers. In me is vested the power to kill or to bring back to life. Thou creature of man's ingenuity, I bid you live! Live!! Live!!!"

"Oh, Dad, she's alive," cried Johnnie.

Mr. Stubbs was delighted. In the exuberance of his emotion, he put his arm about Sally's waist, which act attracted Johnnie's attention, and grasping his father's hand, he gave him a quick turnabout, which left Sally free.

Daisy did not know just how to be "born again," but her audience was not ultra-critical. Throwing her arms wide apart, she faced the astonished Mr. Stubbs and his son and cried:

"Look at me! Why was I made? Why do I look as I do? Who gave me these fine clothes—why do you smile and bow?"

She examined her arm and hand: "Why is my arm so white? Why are my hands so small, when yours are big and bony?" She placed both hands upon her waist. "Why was this dress made so tight? Why am I so short when you are so tall?" She directed all her inquiries to Mr. Stubbs, who stood speechless.

"Ain't she a stunner, Sally?" asked Johnnie. "I'll go and have a talk with her."

He did not go far, for Sally caught his arm and pulled him back. Tom brought a chair and

Daisy sat down. Mr. Stubbs now felt it incumbent upon him to speak to his revivified creation.

"My dear, you have a sweet voice. Won't you sing us a song?"

"No, I won't. I'm tired and hungry, and I want my supper."

"You hear that, Sally," said Johnnie. "She ain't been born more than five minutes and she wants to eat. I'm going to talk to her."

He started forward, but came back suddenly, for Sally was quick motioned and energetic.

"I'm very sorry, my dear," said Mr. Stubbs, "but our larder, to-night, instead of being fat was never leaner. But I'll send my lazy nephew for some food."

Tom interposed: "Oh, no. Don't wake the poor boy. I know how you've used that young man, Mr. Stubbs. After suffering the terrible pangs of hunger, he has fallen into a troubled sleep in which he imagines he has all the delicacies of Lucullus before him. I have helped you, Mr. Stubbs, because you and I, and your son, too, will be near neighbors one of these days."

Johnnie became inquisitive: "Where do you live, Mr.——?"

Tom looked as Satanic as possible:

"Where ray of sun strikes not, and yet 'tis hot,—
Cold drinks are craved by all, who get them not.
'A bourne from which no traveller returns,'
For in each heart a love of country burns.
There's room for all, and when each is my guest,
My hospitality you'll see expressed.
I will not wait—no, no, this very hour,
We all will sup—I have the magic power.
Your best room seek, upon your festive board,
You'll find spread out, all that the times afford.
Fish, flesh, and fowl, for wine, a rich Champagne—
When that is gone, you've but to call again."

"Come, Dad! Come on!" cried Johnnie.

Mr. Stubbs whispered in his son's ear: "We'll call for enough so's to have some left over for to-morrow."

As they left the room, Daisy ran to Tom: "Why, what do you mean? They'll find no supper there."

Sally winked: "Oh, yes, they will."

"But how?" cried Daisy.

Tom laughed: "Well, I didn't stay up chimney all the time. I saw Uncle hide some money in the seat of his big leathern chair, and

that bought the supper. But come, or they will grow suspicious. You're a born actress, Daisy, and Sally is a trump. She set the table, but they must think the Devil did it all—and pays the bills."

CHAPTER XVIII

A SUPPER FOR THREE

When Johnnie entered the best room and saw the table spread for supper, he could not restrain his feelings. To express them he did not use words, but began to whistle, and as he whistled, he walked about the room, surveying the table admiringly. He was soon followed by his father. Johnnie's whistling must have been infectious, for at sight of the well spread table, Mr. Stubbs began to whistle. Their whistling did not take the form of a tune. They simply had recourse to it because it was easier to whistle than to talk. If they had spoken, their language would have been a succession of interjections: "Oh! Ah! Um! Oh! Ah! Um!"

The impromptu concert preliminary to the gastronomic repast was brought to a close by the entrance of Tom, Daisy, and Sally.

There were but three chairs at the table, and Johnnie, raising his left hand, counted on his fingers: "One, two, three, four, five."

"Come now, and take your seats," said Tom. The young lady here at the head of the table; you opposite, Mr. Stubbs—there, and your son here. Your servant will wait on the table."

"Say," cried Johnnie, turning to Tom, "ain't you going to stay?"

"Ladies and gentlemen, pray excuse me; I shall be obliged to bid you good evening."

"Why," cried Johnnie, "you ain't going! Why don't you stay and have a good time?"

"I'm very sorry, but I have many calls to make, and when I miss any of my regular visits, my friends are always disappointed."

Johnnie looked up smilingly: "Too bad you can't stay. Come again when you can make us a longer visit."

"Thank you for your kind invitation. While you are enjoying the repast now spread before you, remember that Prince Mephisto is not so black as he is painted."

Mr. Stubbs, who had lost no time in sampling

some of the viands, looked up and smilingly remarked: "We'll remember to remember that."

Tom bowed very low; Mr. Stubbs and Johnnie scrambled to their feet and returned the salutation; Sally dropped a pretty courtesy, and Daisy waved her hand as a token of farewell. As Johnnie resumed his seat he looked towards the door, but Prince Mephisto had disappeared.

Johnnie felt called upon to compliment their visitor: "He's a gentleman from top to toe. I think we could get along first-rate together."

Mr. Stubbs reflectively scratched the top of his head, upon which no hair had rested for many years: "I did not take to him extraordinarily at first, but he improved on acquaintance, and I may learn to like him some time. Now, let's fall to."

"Hold on, Dad!" cried Johnnie. "Before we begin our tear—I mean tour—through the bountiful repast that our kind visitor has providid, I think we should drink a toast in honor of this young lady," and he smiled unutterable things at Daisy, who turned up her nose at him and winked her left eye.

"Well, go ahead, Johnnie; but the things are getting cold."

Young Mr. Stubbs, after apparently vehement exertions, succeeded in drawing the cork from a bottle of champagne, and filled his father's glass and his own. He attempted to turn some of the wine into Daisy's glass, but she drew it away and crashed it upon the floor.

"Won't you have some?" asked Johnnie.

"No; I never drink."

"Now, Johnnie, we're all ready. Pass the soup," said Mr. Stubbs.

"Wait a minute," said Daisy. "This table isn't set to suit me. I never can eat unless everything is in the right place."

"Can I help you, marm?" asked Sally.

"No, thank you."

Mr. Stubbs turned about in his chair: "Sally, go to bed. We can get along very well without you now."

As soon as Sally was out of sight of the door, she had a self-communion: "I'm glad of it. Now I will go and get ready for the masquerade. I am so glad I have not got to wear that horrid

old dress Mrs. Merrily picked out for me. The boy's costume that Daisy had will suit me to a T. But won't she make it lively for them?"

Daisy had evidently begun making it lively for them, having arranged the food and dishes upon the table in a very grotesque manner.

Johnnie whispered to his father: "I say, Dad, I don't think she was brought up in a first-class hotel; do you? She has a funny way of fixing things."

"Well, Johnnie, we must not be too particular at first. They probably do things different where she came from."

By this time Daisy had arranged the table to her apparent satisfaction, even if it did not suit her companions.

"Now, gentlemen, everything suits me. Come, I'm hungry."

Mr. Stubbs passed Daisy some soup: "Won't you try this?"

She tasted it, then pushed the dish away: "I don't like it. Skillagalee! Eat it yourself."

Mr. Stubbs was disposed to be very polite, as he supposed the meal did not cost him anything.

He passed another dish: "Try this, my dear."

"What is it?"

Johnnie smiled and said: "Skilligalo!"

Daisy took a taste, and then, raising her plate, threw the contents in Mr. Stubbs's face: "Oh, what horrid stuff. Do you want to poison me, you wicked old man?"

Mr. Stubbs jumped to his feet and began wiping his face, inwardly commenting: "She has an angelic temper."

Johnnie felt called upon to act as host: "Here's some nice boiled calve's head and dumplings."

Daisy scowled at him: "You had better eat all that. They say every part strengthens a part."

Johnnie did not like the imputation. He made a face at Daisy and said: "Here's some cold tongue—that's what you want."

Mr. Stubbs felt called upon to interfere: "John Junior, don't forget your bringing up. Remember to remember there's a lady present." He addressed Daisy: "Won't you try some game—a slice of this canvas back duck?"

Daisy laughed immoderately: "Canvas

back? Game? Why, that's a boarding-house chicken."

Johnnie, who was inclined to be jocose, added: "Winter-killed."

Mr. Stubbs seemed to be impressed with the levity of the occasion: "Boarding-house chickens always have canvas backs, leather sides, and lead stuffing. Just the thing to make game of."

They had now reached the dessert. He passed Daisy a piece of pie: "Won't you have some sunflower pie?"

"That ain't sunflower pie; that's squash."

"Now I have you!" cried Johnnie. 'Tain't either; it's pumpkin."

Daisy took an empty plate and pressed it down over the top of the pie: "Now it's squash," she said triumphantly.

Johnnie took up a plate containing a cake: "Here's some wedding cake." He tapped it with his finger: "There's no ring in it." He struck it with his fist. "'Tain't wedding cake; I guess it's pound cake." He passed it to Daisy, who took it from the plate and threw it at him.

"You take the cake." She turned to Mr. Stubbs: "I want some champagne quick."

Mr. Stubbs filled a glass and passed it to her.

"Now I want some bread," she exclaimed.

"Here's a nice loaf; just baked; fresh and warm," and Mr. Stubbs passed it to her.

She grasped a knife and cut a couple of slices. While she was doing this, Mr. Stubbs and Johnnie refilled their glasses, and were in the act of drinking when Daisy cried:

"Nice and warm, eh? Just baked? Six weeks old, I should say! Hard as a rock!"

She threw a slice of bread at Johnnie. The first one missed, but the second was a good shot and knocked the glass from his hand.

Mr. Stubbs leaned over to put his empty glass upon the table. As he did so, the loaf of bread struck him in the ear.

Johnnie whispered to his father: "What does she want, anyway? She must have dyspepsia."

Mr. Stubbs still felt it necessary to placate his guest, so he asked, smilingly: "Won't you have another glass of cham-cham?"

Daisy jumped up: "No! I am not thirsty.

I am not hungry. I won't drink. I won't eat. I want both of you to sing and dance, and tell stories, and do all you can to amuse me."

"Oh!" said Johnnie, satirically, "You're one of those cultivated creatures."

"Yes, I am," said Daisy, "but I can keep house too. I will clear off the table, so you can move it back and we can have room for our dance. Oh! It's so hot and stuffy here! Won't one of you open a window?"

Mr. Stubbs and his son both started to do her bidding, and by their combined efforts, the lower sash was pushed to its highest point and held in place by the stick which lay upon the window seat. As they turned back, to their surprise, Daisy had gathered up the four corners of the table-cloth, mixing the dishes and food which remained into one conglomorate mass, and before they could interfere, she had thrown the whole through the open window. That it reached the ground without impediment was plainly indicated by the loud crash which followed

CHAPTER XIX

A DEBATE ON MATRIMONY

Mr. Stubbs had it in his mind to give Daisy a good talking to, but his thoughts were interrupted by her loud exclamation: "Oh! It's so cold here! I'm almost frozen to death! Won't you close the window?"

Mr. Stubbs and Johnnie looked at the window, but did not offer to do her bidding.

"Very well," said she; "I will do it myself," and before they could interfere, she had pulled out the stick and allowed the window to fall of its own weight, which resulted in the breaking of the majority of the glass panes therein. There was a look of disgust upon Mr. Stubbs's face as she turned towards him.

"What are you thinking about, Mr.——?"

Mr. Stubbs again scratched the vacant expanse that lay between his ears: "I was trying to re-

member to remember how much those dishes cost."

"Did they cost much?" asked Daisy innocently.

"Don't you clear up that way? Are you angry with me?"

"Oh, no," said Mr. Stubbs, "the dishes cost a mere trifle. Your way is a very quick one. I do it that way once in a while. I am sorry about the window because it lets the cold air in, and I cannot get it repaired before day after to-morrow." His inward thought was: "I would like to smash her."

Daisy smiled blandly: "I'm so young! I was afraid I had done something wrong." She jumped up and sat on one end of the table. "Come, sit down with me, both of you, and we'll have a nice talk and then we'll have some fun."

Mr. Stubbs took a seat at her right and Johnnie at her left.

"Now, I would like to know who you are." She pointed her finger at Johnnie: "What is he? Who am I? How did I come here? When did I come, and how long am I going to stay?"

Mr. Stubbs hesitated: "Why, you are my—well—of course—why, I made you."

"Exactly so, but who are you?"

Mr. Stubbs reflected: "Why, I am your father—or your adopted father; perhaps that is nearer the truth."

"Where is my adopted mother?"

"When you are a little older, my dear, I will let you read the family record. I am having it revised."

Again Daisy pointed her finger at Jonnnie: "What's that?"

Young Mr. Stubbs, with his finger in his mouth, replied: "I'm Johnnie."

His father added: "My only son and heir."

"When you adopted him, why didn't you pick out a pretty one like me?"

Johnnie turned away: "Oh, she makes me tired."

Daisy expostulated: "I don't want him for a brother."

Mr. Stubbs smiled broadly: "Well, my dear, you need not have him for a brother. Don't you think he would make a better husband?"

Daisy shook head vehemently: "Oh, no, no, no. I wouldn't marry him. As a choice of two evils, I will take him for a brother; or, rather, a half-brother. But how was it that I was born all grown-up?"

Mr. Stubbs meditated: "The Devil has gone, so I might as well take all the credit. Well, my dear, you are the result of a new process of my own invention, by which daughters, husbands, etc., can be made to order."

"Do you take the old ones in exchange?"

"I had not thought of that. I might be able to work them over by means of my electric renovator. That's what brought you to life."

"Funny! I didn't feel it."

Johnnie remembered something: "I did, Dad; didn't I?"

Mr. Stubbs assented: "It has been through the family, my son."

"What is your family? What is your name, anyway?"

"My name is John Bull Stubbs, Senior. I have to call myself Senior, because my son, here, bears the same name—John Bull Stubbs, Junior."

"What's my name?"

"Oh! I forgot," said Mr. Stubbs; "I have not named you. Well, you look very much like a young lady who lives in this village, so I think I shall name you after her. Her name is Daisy."

"Then I'm a Daisy, am I, Mr. Stubbs?"

This was too much for Johnnie, who muttered: "Oh, you're a peach."

"Stubbs is a very pretty name; but where did you get the other name—Bull?"

Johnnie, thinking she addressed him, was ready with an answer: "I was named after my grandfather, who started the first toy-shop here."

"Yes," said Mr. Stubbs; "he came from Ireland."

"Oh, I see," said Daisy; "he was an Irish Bull. But what's this place called?"

"Middleton," said Mr. Stubbs. "It was originally named Middletown, because it is half way between Dunmoor and Arkwright, where the big cotton mill is; but now it's known as Middleton-on-Quick."

"What's Quick?" she asked.

Johnnie felt that he had been left out of the

conversation long enough: "Oh! Quick's the river that turns the wheel that makes the toys that we sell to pay the bills of Dad and me, who live in the house that Grandfather Jack built."

Daisy ignored him: "Are there any nice young gentlemen in this place?"

Mr. Stubbs answered her: "Johnnie is the best match in the town—good-looking—"

At the compliment Johnnie grinned.

"—rich—"

Daisy looked astonished: "Why, I thought he was in love with that other young lady who waited on the table."

"Sally! Sally, the servant! Oh, no! Nothing serious there. She's a nobody."

Daisy clapped her hands: "Why, that would make a splendid match—a nobody like Sally and a somebody like Johnnie. You know, two nobodies or two somebodys never get along well together. Do you know that I like to ask questions?"

Johnnie shook his head "Nobody would ever notice it."

Daisy turned to Mr. Stubbs: "Well I do.

You said you made me; how did you do it? I am full of curiosity."

"Angels always are," said Mr. Stubbs with a smile.

"Well, I ain't."

Johnnie saw a chance for a retort: "You take too much for granted. He didn't say you was an angel."

Daisy turned on him angrily: "Well, I am."

Mr. Stubbs saw that trouble was brewing: "Yes, my dear, you are. Now, you stop plaguing her, John Junior."

"I ain't plaguing her, Dad. She's too sensitive."

"Now, Mr. Stubbs, tell me how you made me."

"Well, my dear, I just made you out of half kid and half calf."

"Do you mean that I'm half calf?"

Johnnie thought that the joke was on Daisy and he grinned. She pointed her finger at him: "You didn't use any kid when you made him, did you? Go on, Daddy."

Mr. Stubbs's smile was as broad as a punch bowl: "I cut you out by the best anatomical

patterns; then stitched you up with a sewing machine."

Daisy looked astonished. "A sewing machine? How?"

"No, a Singer—the only kind that's good for such heavy work. Your face troubled me the most."

Johnnie smiled and muttered: "So much cheek."

Mr. Stubbs continued his description: "I made it of wax—painted and powdered it—bought you some nice false hair, and false teeth in Lunnon, where I had that dress made."

"But how did you know that you could make me live, Daddy?"

"I will illustrate." Mr. Stubbs took down a jumping-jack from a shelf and pulled the string: "You see this simple toy?"

"Oh, I see!" cried Daisy. "You made Johnnie first on that plan."

Mr. Stubbs pulled the string several times: "Now, you see, he goes up; now, you see, he comes down. That's the dynamic principle upon which you were constructed."

Johnnie looked up knowingly: "I can grasp that."

"Well, I can't," said Daisy; "it's a mystery to me."

Mr. Stubbs became philosophical: "Life usually is; and an exertion too."

"Don't you make anything, Mr. Stubbs, but girls and boys?"

"Oh, yes. I'm the leading manufacturer of mechanical toys in the United Kingdom. Here's my toy watch." He took one from the shelf. "Always keeps good time—never loses a minute; never gains one."

Daisy took the watch and looked at it. It indicated a quarter past three. "This doesn't tell time."

"Oh, yes it does, my dear. You set it right and it stays right. That's more than expensive watches will do."

Johnnie had become interested: "Then there's the goat and the dog. We make two pastures and put the goat and the dog in the right-hand one; then we turn the crank and the goat is left alone."

"What becomes of the dog?" asked Daisy.

Johnnie grinned: "He's in the other pasture."

Mr. Stubbs became descriptive: "Then there is Jonah and the whale. I turn the crank and Jonah swallows the whale."

Daisy betrayed too much knowledge: "You have it wrong, Mr. Stubbs; the whale swallows Jonah."

"Oh, no, my dear. I have studied natural history and you have never studied anything. Whales are growing smaller every year, but Jonahs are getting bigger."

Johnnie was waiting for his chance: "Oh! You ought to see the donkey and the man, and see the donkey's heels go up and wait for him to come down."

Daisy looked mystified: "What does the man do?"

Johnnie thought: "She's stupid." Then he said: "Why, he's the one you're waiting for to come down."

Mr. Stubbs had not described all of his inventions: "My greatest—ah—construction—excepting you, of course—is my medicated toy."

"What's that?" asked Daisy. "Candy?"

"Oh, no. Well, of course, you do not know, but most children do not like medicines, but almost any child will put a toy in its mouth. Don't you understand?"

"Yes—Yes."

"Well, I make a very large brown cow, and I medicate it by painting it with castor oil and rhubarb."

Daisy had become tired of the enumeration of the contents of Noah's Ark: "I'm very much obliged to you, Mr. Stubbs. Now, Johnnie, what can you do to amuse me?"

"Oh, I can't tell you much."

"Well, I didn't suppose you could; but as this is my birthday, you might be obliging."

Mr. Stubbs felt it his duty to encourage his offspring: "Now, Johnnie, try to remember to remember something."

"Well, say," began Johnnie, "did you ever hear about Little Jack Horner?"

Daisy shook her head: "No, I never did. Who was he?"

"Well, I've got tired of sitting on this table.

Let's get some chairs and come up front of the fireplace. I'll put on a big log; then we'll be comfortable, and I will tell you the most wonderful story that you ever heard in all your life."

CHAPTER XX

"LITTLE JACK HORNER"

JOHNNIE'S suggestion was followed at once. Mr. Stubbs sat in his high-backed arm-chair while Johnnie took a low stool. For Daisy, a rocking-chair, to which Johnnie, with a touch of old-time chivalry, added a foot-stool. Daisy folded here hands and looked at Johnnie, whose saucer-like eyes and expansive mouth indentified him with the mythical character whose story he was to tell.

"Are you ready?" asked Johnnie.

Mr. Stubbs did not respond, but Daisy clapped her hands and replied: "I shall be delighted to hear about this wonderful young man."

Johnnie began in a sing-song tone:

Little Jack Horner,
Sat in a corner,
Eating a baker's pie;
In his thumb he did dig,
And he pulled out a big—

Then he stopped and grinned.

Daisy tapped her foot impatiently: "Well, what did he pull out?"

Johnnie smiled to full capacity: "You've got to ask me before I'll tell."

"I did ask you, and I won't ask again."

"The book I got it out of says a raisin and a currant, but this is the way I tell it—"

A big bumble bee and a fly.

Daisy laughed, not so much at the words as at the comical manner in which they were said.

"Any more?"

"Yards of it," said Johnnie.

Little Jack Horner,
Sat in a corner,
Holding a great big bun;
He broke it in two,
Then did loudly boo-hoo—

Daisy was interested: "What was the matter? What made him cry?"

Johnnie wished the regulation query: "You've got to ask me."

Mr. Stubbs became indignant: "She did ask you. You tell her quick or I'll thrash you."

Johnnie complied.

Because the inside wasn't done.

Daisy nodded: "Go on."

Little Jack Horner,
Ate fruit in a corner,
At sight of his mother he hid it;
His childish young frolic,
Did end in a colic—

As Johnnie stopped he looked up and met his father's stern gaze; he quickly supplied the missing line:

It was the green apples that did it.

Johnnie did not wait for an invitation to continue:

Little Jack Horner,
Was sick in a corner,
The Doctor seemed quite at a loss;
But molasses did give,
And ginger root too,
Put hot bricks to his feet,
He was warmed through and through—

Another provoking pause. Mr. Stubbs scowled, and Johnnie hastened to add: "He got better."

Daisy, a trifle curious to know why, asked: "What cured him?"

Johnnie was not a born humorist, but he laughed as he said:

The apples it made into sauce.

"That must be the end of it," said Daisy. "I hope so."

"Oh, no, there are forty-seven more verses, but if you're tired, I'll give you the last one."

Little Jack Horner,
Did lay in a corner,
A sleeping after his pain.
They left him there,
In the angels' care—

Quietness reigned. Mr. Stubbs moved very audibly. Daisy yawned. Johnnie grew restless.

"Don't you want the end of it?"

"Oh, I don't care."

"Well, I'll finish it up anyway."

Until he got hungry again.

Daisy gave emphasis to the finale. She jumped up, and, as she did so, kicked the footstool into the fireplace, where it straddled the big log which was burning fiercely. Johnnie sprang forward to save it from the flames; at the instant Mr. Stubbs made a similar motion, and the heads of the

would-be rescuers came together with a resounding crack. They fell to the floor. Daisy grew pale, for she feared they were seriously injured. When they arose, shaking themselves like two dogs, they found the footstool wrapped in flames. Daisy had resumed her seat on the table, and beckoned them to come and sit beside her.

CHAPTER XXI

AN IMPROMPTU CONCERT

DAISY kicked her heels against the table legs, keeping time with them.

"Say, Johnnie, can you sing?"

He hummed, then he whistled: "That's all I can do."

"Can't you sing, Mr. Stubbs?"

"No, but Tom can."

"Who's Tom?"

"He's my lazy, good-for-nothing nephew. He'd much rather eat, and sing, and dance than work."

"He's just the one we need, Mr. Stubbs. Go and call him."

"He's sound asleep. He gorges himself and then has to sleep it off, just like a snake."

Daisy mused: "Tom must have got that Devil

"Daisy kicked her heels against the table legs."

dress off by this time." She shook her fist at Mr. Stubbs: "No matter! Go wake him up, and move lively."

Mr. Stubbs felt that it was useless to argue with his creation. She was a woman, and, therefore, unreasonable and domineering.

"Come, Johnnie, it will take us both. He sleeps deep."

Tom's room was beyond the workshop. Sally, who had been, for a while, watching the proceedings within through a window, came in as soon as the door closed after Mr. Stubbs and his son.

"Hello, Daisy, where have they gone?"

"I've sent them to wake Tom up," and she laughed merrily.

"Oh, he's not been asleep, but he'll keep them waiting and make them think he has. He sent you this pistol."

Daisy took it, but handled it so carelessly that Sally retreated in alarm: "Look out, Daisy, or it'll go off."

"No, it won't; I'll hold on to it."

"But you don't understand," cried Sally. "It's loaded."

"I didn't know it was loaded." Daisy regarded it attentively: "Will it kick? Is it sure death?"

"I don't think so," said Sally. "It isn't a toy pistol."

Daisy placed the pistol on a shelf in a cabinet full of kitchen utensils and some fine old China.

"Where are you going, Sally?"

"Why, to the masquerade, of course. How do I look?"

As Sally spoke she threw off a long cloak. She was dressed in the Tyrolean costume that Daisy had wished to wear.

"You look lovely. If Tom could see you, he'd change his mind about that dress."

"Aren't you and Tom coming?"

"How can I tell? If I can get those two fools tired and sleepy, or tipsy, I'll get away. Where are my clothes? Where will they put me to sleep, if I can't get away?"

Sally pointed to a door: "That's the spare room. The dummy's in there, and your clothes too. You can get out of the window, and Tom will meet you, and we'll all go to the grand ball,

Won't it be jolly?" Sally put on her cloak. "If you don't get away pretty soon, I shall come back to see what the matter is."

She made her escape just in time, for she had no sooner closed the door than Mr. Stubbs and Johnnie returned, accompanied by Tom, who was in his working clothes.

Mr. Stubbs made the introduction: "Tom, this young lady is a friend of the family and wants to hear you sing. Give us something solid and substantial, and you shall have a good old-fashioned Christmas breakfast."

"That's a good inducement, Uncle Stubbs, but don't forget that I've got to sing on a very empty stomach."

Daisy pulled Mr. Stubbs's coat-sleeve: "Will you be kind enough to introduce *me* to that young man?"

"Oh, yes; I forgot. Tom, this is—this is—Miss—Miss—"

"Mistake, I surmise, Dad," said Johnnie.

"No, it isn't either. Your father called me Daisy and my other name is Fortune—Miss Fortune."

"I have known one kind of misfortune so long," said Tom, that this Miss Fortune seems like an old acquaintance."

Mr. Stubbs snarled: "Well, don't take this occasion to bring up family troubles."

"Well, Uncle Stubbs, as I've taken quite a fancy to the young lady, I'll do all I can to make her visit a pleasant one."

"Thank you, Mr. Tom," said Daisy smilingly.

Tom thought a little dignity would avert suspicion: "Madam, my name is Bright."

"Nobody ever thinks of calling you so," commented Mr. Stubbs."

Johnnie grinned: "I always call him Tommy; same as I do the cat."

Tom gave Johnnie a vicious kick in the shin, but the latter was ashamed to tell his father before Daisy and bore his punishment in silence.

Mr. Stubbs remembered to remember: "So you've taken a fancy to her, have you?"

Tom nodded.

"Well, if you want that breakfast, you'll sing your little song and then go back to bed again, and see how *that* will suit your fancy."

Tom had a natural tenor voice which had never been spoiled by injudicious forcing, and he sang with great feeling a song which had always made him welcome at Daisy's home, for Grandpa Larkin was an old sailor.

THE BEACON LIGHT

I

On the air there is borne a cry of woe
'Bove the roar and the rush of wind and snow;
Help! Oh, help! are the words that rise on high,
'Bove the rush and the roar and the wind's wild cry.
And the good ship strikes on the jagged rocks,
No human help can aid her!

II

Like a star in the sky the beacon shines
And its rays reach afar like helping lines;
Though the light, to the heart, Hope's gleam may give,
They are doomed, for no boat can hope to live.
And the good ship beats on the jagged rocks,
No human help can aid her!

III

Say not so! With a cheer the life line flies
To the ship, and beyond, across her lies;
Rides the car back and forth with souls to save,
Till they all have escaped a wat'ry grave.
But the good ship breaks on the jagged rocks,
No human help can aid her!

"That was splendid," cried Daisy. "That's what I call high-toned music. I am much obliged, Mr. Bright."

"So am I, Mr. Bright," said Mr. Stubbs. "And now, Mr. Bright, just go to bed, Mr. Bright; or you won't be up in time for that breakfast, Mr. Bright."

"Don't worry, Mr. Stubbs. I'd sit up all night, Mr. Stubbs, rather than lose that breakfast, Mr. Stubbs," cried Tom, as he disappeared from the room to escape Mr. Stubbs's heavy oaken cane which was hurled after him.

CHAPTER XXII

THE 44TH HUSSARS

DAISY was evidently determined that the evening's amusement should not be summarily concluded. Turning to Johnnie, she asked: "Can you dance?"

Johnnie affected Captain Sabreton's drawl and replied: "Naw, I cawn't dawnce."

"Yes, you can dance, too," said his father.

Johnnie dropped his drawl: "No, I can't; I've forgotten how."

"Well, you must remember to remember."

Johnnie was inclined to be stubborn: "No, I won't."

His father grasped him by the collar: "Young man, now you dance, or I'll thrash you and make you dance."

Daisy thought she could enliven the proceed-

ings, so she took the pistol from the dresser and discharged it. In his efforts to escape from apparently impending danger, Mr. Stubbs ran against Johnnie, and they both fell to the floor. Neither attempted to rise, but kept a sitting position.

"Mr. Stubbs, can you play on any kind of an instrument?" asked Daisy.

"I have a fiddle."

"Well, you can play the fiddle while Johnnie dances."

"What!" cried Johnnie. "Dad going to play the fiddle! Well, I wish I was dead."

"Johnnie, what you want is a bracer," said Daisy. "There's some wine left in the bottle in the other room; go and get it and some glasses.

When Johnnie came back, Daisy filled the glasses and he and Mr. Stubbs drank.

"You're not a temperance man, Mr. Stubbs," Daisy remarked.

"Oh, yes, I am; but I have no prejudice against good liquor of any kind."

"Oh, Dad, Dad," said Johnnie; "I feel just like a balloon. I'm going up."

Mr. Stubbs was happy: "Well, go up, if you want to. I'll go up and come back with you."

Johnnie grasped his father's hand: "Let's both go up together, Dad."

Daisy thought: "Oh, if they only would go up and never come back!"

Mr. Stubbs had been a devotee of Terpsichore in his younger days. Johnnie, though deficient in book knowledge, had his perceptive faculties well developed and was a good mimic; so when his father took some dancing steps, which he remembered to remember, Johnnie imitated him.

The result was so grotesquely funny that peals of laughter came from Daisy, who was literally forced to hold her sides. She encouraged them by clapping her hands and crying: "Bravo! Bravo!!" until they literally fell exhausted. Mr. Stubbs sat down in his arm-chair by the fire, while Johnnie reclined upon the table.

Daisy felt that the time had now arrived for an end to the evening's festivities. "While they are sleeping," she said to herself, "I will do some thinking. I'll show them that I can be a match for both of them. I have a good mind to

go to the workshop and smash all the dolls and toys that are there. When they see what I have done, they will say: 'We've had enough of you,' but I don't know how to begin. I wish I had a blunderbuss. I'd scare Johnnie to death and drive his father crazy. Oh! What shall I do? Well, I think my woman's wit will help me out. I'll find some way. When I get through with them, they'll be glad enough to let me go. If Tom were here, he could help me." She called loudly: "Tom! Tom!! Tom!!! Oh, he doesn't hear me." She tiptoed across the room and looked at Mr. Stubbs and then at Johnnie. "I hope they are sound asleep. Sally said my clothes were in that room. I will go in and put them on." She started towards the door when Mr. Stubbs roused up.

"What's that? What's that?"

He went to the table and pulled Johnnie's ear vigorously. "Wake up! Wake up! She's looking for us."

"Oh, it's no use," thought Daisy. "I've got to make a business of it and frighten them to death. I will make them both remember to re-

member this night." She turned smilingly towards them: "I hope you both had a nice nap. Now we'll have some fun."

"It's about time for us to have a show," said Mr. Stubbs. "You've had all the fun so far."

"Well, you shall have a show," cried Daisy. "We'll play soldiers. I'll be captain."

Johnnie elevated his nose and said satirically: "Oh, of course, you'll be captain. It wouldn't be you if you wasn't the boss."

Daisy paid no attention to his remarks, but passed a toy gun to each and placed paper hats upon their heads.

Mr. Stubbs dropped his gun and threw his hat upon the floor. "No, I'm too old; besides, I'm too short and I'm light weight; I have bunions; I can't march; my teeth are all gone, and I'm near-sighted; I'm insane, too, and have an only child depending upon me for support. I'm exempt."

"Say, Captain," said Johnnie; "I have the same troubles Dad has."

"It's no use trying to get out of it, gentlemen. I love the military and you must parade."

"Mr. Stubbs remarked: "You haven't been born long enough to know what you do love."

Daisy had provided herself with a bass drumstick. She struck Mr. Stubbs in the chest with it, and involuntarily he doubled up. Then she struck him upon the back, the effect of which was to straighten him out. She then replaced the cap upon his head and handed him the toy gun.

Mr. Stubbs looked bewildered and his appearance caused Johnnie to laugh. A quick application of the drumstick, however, induced him to take a position by the side of his father, and they both looked like raw recruits.

"Now then, attention!"

"Dad, we look like veterans, don't we?"

"More like two fools."

Daisy repeated the command: "Attention! Right Dress!"

Mr. Stubbs and Johnnie looked at each other; then at their clothes.

"Say, Captain, we have on the right dress, haven't we?"

"Oh, don't stand that way," she cried, and

"Now, carry arms!"

she imitated their awkward pose. "Stand up straight and toe a line. Put your heels together. What thick heads you have! Now, carry arms!"

The two soldiers looked at each other inquiringly. Each was willing to follow the other's lead. Finally, Mr. Stubbs took the gun in his arms as though he were carrying a baby, and Johnnie quickly imitated his action.

"Shoulder arms!" cried Daisy.

This order was as incomprehensible to the recruits as the others had been. Finally they faced each other and placed the guns on their shoulders.

"Order arms!" was the next command.

They looked at Daisy in blank astonishment. Finally Mr. Stubbs asked: "How many?"

"Present arms!"

They advanced, holding out the guns to Daisy, who refused them. Finally they exchanged weapons.

"Ground arms!"

This order was followed with military precision, for the guns were dropped upon the floor.

"Say, Captain, how do you like our drilling?" asked Johnnie.

"It was just as bad as it could be."

Mr. Stubbs shook his head: "It won't be any better."

"Now," said Daisy, "we'll march."

"I can't march," said Mr. Stubbs. "I ought to be in the hospital."

"Which foot do we start with?" asked Johnnie.

Mr. Stubbs put out his right foot and Johnnie his left.

"Forward march!"

The result can be anticipated.

"You started with the wrong foot," cried Johnnie.

"No, I didn't," said his father; "I started with the right."

"You started with the right?" asked Daisy. "Well, that left you wrong, and that is not right. You must start off with both feet at the same time."

"What!" cried Mr. Stubbs. "Start off with all my feet at the same time? I'm no caterpillar."

"I don't think you will ever make good foot

soldiers. I think you would do better as cavalry. You've seen the 44th Hussars at Dunmoor. Now, you two will be hussars and I'll be infantry. We'll have a sham fight."

"No sham fight for me," said Mr. Stubbs. "If I fight it will be in earnest."

"Where are the horses?" asked Johnnie.

"Didn't I see some big rocking-horses in the workshop? They'll do finely."

Neither Mr. Stubbs nor his son remarked Daisy's intimate knowledge of the interior arrangement of the little red mill.

"Oh! Come on, Dad! Let's bring in the fiery, inflamed steeds."

When Mr. Stubbs and Johnnie returned, they seemed determined to enter into the spirit of the occasion. They put on their soldier hats and grasped their swords, and jumped upon the horses.

"Prepare to resist infantry!" cried Daisy.

Mr. Stubbs and Johnnie lifted their swords, charged, and rode their horses at full speed.

Daisy raised the pistol, pointed it at them and cried: "Come on!"

"I say, Dad, ain't she a live one? I admire her."

Daisy discharged the pistol. The hussars leaned forward upon their horses' necks for protection.

"Admire her, you fool!" cried Mr. Stubbs. "She's a little devil. She's worse than your mother was."

Daisy threw the bass drumstick at Mr. Stubbs, who dodged it, but losing his balance, fell from his horse to the floor.

"Yes, I am a little Devil, and don't you forget to remember to remember it."

"Grab her, Johnnie! Grab her! cried Mr. Stubbs.

Daisy grasped a big book and threw it at Johnnie, knocking him from his horse. Mr. Stubbs rushed at Daisy, who ran, and then began a wild chase about the room, Johnnie following his father. Around the table they went; then behind the dresser, which stood out from the wall. Daisy watched her chance. When it happened that she was behind the dresser, and Mr. Stubbs and his son were in front, she pushed

it over upon them. It fell with a crash, burying the hussars beneath an avalanche of pots and pans, knives, forks, and spoons, and dishes. Johnnie, being the least encumbered, was soon upon his feet. Daisy ran from the room, with him in full pursuit.

In the kitchen they met Tom and Sally who had been listening and awaiting the outcome. It took Tom but a few minutes to show Johnnie how egregiously he and his father had been fooled.

"It's almost ten o'clock," said Sally. "If we're going to the masquerade, we must lose no time."

Johnnie regarded Tom's costume: "Say, were you the Devil?"

"Why, of course."

"When the old gent knows it he will die of apoplexy," Johnnie remarked. Then he added, with a sad lack of filial tenderness: "It will serve him just right! He had no business to make me a wife when I had a nice little girl of my own," and he put his arm around Sally's waist.

"Come along," cried Sally, "or we shall be too late."

"I can't go," said Johnnie. "I have no costume."

"What you have on will do," said Sally. "You couldn't get anything funnier if you tried."

The party made its way quickly to Barnabas Briggs's wagon, which they found waiting for them under the old oak, and in which were seated a dozen or more of the Middleton-on-Quick young fellows and girls, who were all going to the masquerade at Dunmoor Barracks.

CHAPTER XXIII

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

THE fire had burned low; only a few embers in the fireplace sent out a fitful glow. Mr. Stubbs sat before it, his head bowed upon his breast. The house was very quiet; there were no sounds of movement, speech, or laughter. Mr. Stubbs was alone with his thoughts, and they were not particularly pleasant ones. The candle had burned out, but the clouds had parted and a white streak of moolight came through the window and lighted up the room. There was a sound of voices—somebody singing.

Mr. Stubbs smiled grimly: "Christmas carols! Peace on earth and good will to men. I used to sing them when I was a boy. I can remember to remember even now how the old church bells used to ring out their merry chimes. I want to be good, but I can't be as long as *she* is in there," and he pointed to the door of the

spare room. "I wish the Devil would come and take his own and clear out; but he can't have her until he pays damages. I have locked her in, secured the window on the outside, and hidden the ladder which I must have left standing against the house when I fixed the shingles last week. I will have a little nap and see if I can't remember to forget all about the Devil and the Devil's tricks."

A thunder and lightning storm in the midst of winter is a novelty, but novelties, as a rule, are short lived. They have not that permanency attached to things which are of daily occurrence. The storm which had led to the carrying out of those plans upon which Mr. Stubbs had meditated for so long, passed away as quickly as it had come. A heavy wind moved the clouds, and a full-orbed moon soon lighted up each cottage, and hill, and dale, all of which were covered with snow. Over the road sped Mr. Barnabas Briggs's six sturdy horses, carrying their freight of young men and women, who looked forward with keen anticipation to the delights in store for them.

Nor were they disappointed. On their arrival at the Barracks, they found that they had been transformed into a bower of beauty. The Hussars had had their annual dinner, in which choice wines had formed no inconsiderable part. Their faces were flushed with happiness from the effects of what may be called the spiritual comforts that were provided at the close of the meal. They were in a happy mood, and disposed to make their guests also happy. The band of the 44th Hussars was noted for miles around for its numbers and the skilled technique of its playing. On such occasions as this it was transformed into an orchestra, particularly string and reed instruments.

There was a motley crowd upon the floor of the ballroom. Kings and queens, princes and peasants elbowed each other, and the hum of conversation was constant. Both men and women wore masks. There were plenty of corners for flirtatious conversations, which neither party would have acknowledged if their masks had been removed and they had stood face to face.

Johnnie had obtained a mask which, in his

case, was an effectual disguise. No one was supposed to have come in his ordinary clothes, and those who looked at Johnnie supposed it was a clever make-up and wondered who it was who looked so much like Mr. Stubbs's son.

Johnnie suffered the extreme pangs of jealousy. Sally told him that as he was a boy, and she was dressed like a boy, it would not look well for them to dance together. "Besides," she added, "you can't dance anyway."

"Can't I?" said Johnnie. "You ought to have seen me dancing to-night with Dad. When Daisy fired the pistol, didn't she make us step lively?"

"I don't blame her," said Sally. "Whatever put it into your father's head to think he could bring a doll to life?"

"Oh, he meant well," said Johnnie. "He wants me to get married, and as he wasn't satisfied with any of the girls in the village, he thought he'd make one himself. He is a scientific man, Dad is. 'Cause somebody else has not done things, don't stop him. He wants to be first in everything, and I'm just like him."

This was too much for Sally, who turned away laughing, and a few minutes later she was dancing with a little peasant girl, who felt sure that her companion was Lieutenant Harry Goss of the Hussars, who had told her that he was going to wear an Austrian costume. Such mistakes, however, are numerous at masquerades, where the slightest excuse for a misunderstanding is looked upon as sufficient.

Tom and Daisy were never so happy.

"This is Heaven!" said Tom.

"If it is," replied Daisy, "you are certainly out of place."

Mr. Toby Whackers and Miss Jennie Jamieson Jones were a most noticeable couple. He was dressed as a Turk, with a huge scimitar hanging by his side. It may take nine tailors to make a man, but that night he looked every inch a Pasha, and the little goose who accompanied him was so impressed with his manly appearance that she suggested his selling out his business and going to live in Constantinople.

Captain Sabreton had not discarded his military uniform and his mask did not prevent him

from being recognized by all. Then, too, the little Swiss peasant girl, to whom he devoted most of his time, must be the little milliner from Middleton-on Quick; but, as the reader knows, Miss Ruth Dunn Moore was at home and, undoubtedly sound asleep at the time, dreaming, perhaps, of her darling Horatio.

At a masquerade, everyone becomes, for the time being, a detective. There was one couple, however, whose identity was not discovered until the great bell on the Barracks tolled out the hour of twelve, and all masks were removed. Then there were signs of astonishment both in words and looks, for the plump little lady who had worn a Shakespearean costume, presumably that of Anne Boleyn, one of Henry the Eighth's unfortunate wives, proved to be Mrs. Merrily, while the stately gentleman who had been attired as Sir John Falstaff, was none other than Squire Boddley Coldfish.

Mrs. Coldfish told one of her Christmas day callers that her husband had been aroused from his sleep in the night to go to Mr. Eales's house, for that old gentleman felt sure that he could not

live until morning and seemed very anxious to have a will made.

The morning light was breaking when the party broke up. Mr. Barnabas Briggs, who had quaffed many flagons of ale, and smoked innumerable pipes of tobacco, had his six sturdy horses ready for the return trip.

Daisy had intended to stay at Dunmoor with Mrs. Merrily, but her search for that lady was unavailing, and Tom persuaded her to make one of the home party.

After Mr. Briggs's wagon was well on its way towards Middleton-on-Quick, two solitary vehicles left Dunmoor, in one of which was Mr. Whackers and his intended, while the other was occupied by Mrs. Merrily and Mrs. Coldfish's husband.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE UNDERWORLD

It was six o'clock when the little party reached Middleton-on-Quick. The passengers had been dropped off from time to time, so that when Mr. Briggs drove up to the little cot by the river, only Tom, Daisy, Sally, and Johnnie were left.

Mr. and Mrs. Larkin had not expected Daisy so soon, but Toby was alert and it did not take him long to convince them that it was necessary to open the front door.

Mr. Stubbs was sitting in his arm-chair, fast asleep. The fire had gone out, and the room was cold—very cold.

"I hope he's not frozen," said Johnnie. "I'm too young to take care of the business."

"I hope he's not frozen," echoed Tom; "but I'm old enough and I could make more money out of the business than he does."

"Stop your nonsense," said Sally. "You go

and get some wood, Tom, and you, Johnnie, build the fire. When he gets warm he will wake up."

"You mean he will thaw out," said Tom.

"Well," said Sally, "if his tongue has been quiet all night, when it does start, we'll get enough of it."

"You should not talk that way about my father," said Johnnie, seriously.

"Well, I guess I think almost as much of him as you do. When you thought he was frozen, the only regret you had was that you were too young to take care of the business. I'd rather be an orphan with no folks or nothing than to have a father and wish him in his grave," and Sally flounced out of the room.

"She's too sharp for you, Johnnie," said Tom.

"That's the reason I want her in the family. Everybody says Dad is an old dough-head and that I take after him, and I think we ought to have one smart one in the firm."

Tom clapped him on the shoulder: "You're all right, Johnnie. Your heart is in the right place, even if your head is a little empty sometimes."

Johnnie laughed: "You have the same trouble with your stomach that I have with my head, don't you, Tom? But you suffer more than I do."

Tom went for the wood, and soon a bright fire was crackling in the old fireplace, and the sparks went merrily up the chimney.

The old gentleman stretched and yawned and finally became cognizant of his surroundings.

"Is that you, Johnnie?"

"Merry Christmas, Dad! I've just got up."

"Is Sally up?"

"Yes, she's getting breakfast."

"Where's Tom?"

"Oh, he's helping her."

"Well, he wouldn't be if he didn't think he was going to get an extra good breakfast."

"Didn't you go to bed last night, Dad?"

"No; I was so tired that I went to sleep and forgot to wake up. My back is lame, my neck aches, and my feet are cold; but I'm all right. I feel just as well as though I had gone to bed."

"Breakfast's ready!" called Sally.

They were soon gathered about the table.

"Are you hungry, Tom?" asked Mr. Stubbs.

"Not so much as usual, Uncle. I passed a horrible, terrible, miserable night."

Mr. Stubbs never got off his hobby: "Over-eating is what did it."

"Why, Tom, what happened to you?" asked Sally, who did not think that her employer's explanation was the correct one.

"Oh, I had a dream—a regular nightmare."

"That's what it was—indigestion," said Mr. Stubbs.

"Did you see snakes?" asked Sally.

"I dreamed I died and went down below." He lowered his voice and pointed downward.

Johnnie became interested: "Say, Tommy, what killed you?"

"Oh, of course it was all a dream, but I thought—beg your pardon, Uncle—but I thought you pounded me to death with a big stick for over-eating, and the first question that Old Nick asked me was: 'Tommy, how is your uncle?' I had a long and pleasant conversation with him, but he was very mad about something. He said there was a man who was trying with wicked

ways to steal his power from him. He said he was going to make him sick."

"What had the man done?" asked Mr. Stubbs.

"Well, he told me the whole story," said Tom, "but he didn't give any names. He said there was an old fool up in New England who had made a doll and had called on him to put the breath of life into it. It seems that this old fellow had an idea that if he could bring this doll to life, she would make a good wife for his son. Now, the Devil does not like to have anyone interfere with his way of doing things, and I should not be surprised if that man, whoever he is, heard from him at an early date."

Mr. Stubbs dropped his knife and fork and moved back from the table. His cheeks, which were usually a bright red, became quite pale.

"Are you sick, Uncle?" asked Tom.

Mr. Stubbs stood up and lifted his right hand slowly: "He's right, Tom. The Devil told you the truth, and I am the man who made the doll."

Tom and Sally cried out together: "You?"

"Yes. I'm going to tell you everything. They say confession is good for the soul. I made the

doll—a young woman—really human—but she lacked the breath of life. The Devil was right; I intended she should be Johnnie's wife. To bring her to life, I tried magic arts and electric sparks, but all in vain. In my despair I called upon Satan. He always comes when he's called. He put life into her veins, but, at the same time, he filled her chuck full of his own deviltry."

Johnnie could repress himself no longer: "Yes, and she treated us shamefully. She broke all our dishes, and she was impudent to Dad. It made me blush. She made me tell her all I knew, got all the secrets of the toy business out of Dad, gave us something to drink that made us boozy; then she made us dance, and sent us to wake Tom up to sing for her. But it was easy so far."

Mr. Stubbs shook his head dolefully: "Then the Devil took possession of her. You tell them, Johnnie."

"She made us drill and march, and ride horseback; then she fired pistols at us, pushed the big dresser over on top of us and broke all the dishes."

Sally raised both her hands in astonishment: "It's wonderful; isn't it, Tom?"

"If anybody but Uncle had told me that, I wouldn't have believed it."

Sally shook her head: "Of course not."

Mr. Stubbs was evidently perturbed in his mind: "What did His—His—Satanic Majesty say about me, Tom?"

"He didn't seem to be prejudiced against you personally, but said, in a general way that when he once got his claws on a person, he clung to him and made sure of him unless his intended victim made a full confession of all his wrong-doings, did the right thing by all whom he had injured, and thus escaped his power."

Johnnie looked up appealingly to his father: "Perhaps it ain't my place to give advice, Dad, but if I was you I'd own up, if I had done anything wrong, and square myself with the Devil, before he comes after you."

"Well, I have owned up about the doll, haven't I?" and Mr. Stubbs spoke with asperity.

"Well, if that's all you've got to confess," said Tom, "the Old Nick can't harm you."

The old gentleman scratched his head reflectively: "No, Tom; I don't think I'm quite quits with the Devil yet. I've had something on my mind for a good many years and I suppose he knows all about it. I think it is better for me to tell you myself, then when he comes up I'll say—"

"Chestnut," suggested Johnnie.

CHAPTER XXV

A FORCED CONFESSION

"Tom," Mr. Stubbs began abruptly, "what gave you the idea that your father left you any money? You were only five years old when he died and could not have told a farthing from a sovereign."

"Oh, yes, I could," said Tom. "I used to get lots of farthings, but nobody ever gave me a sovereign."

"Well, that ain't answering my question. What put the idea into your head that there was any money coming to you?"

Tom hesitated: "I don't want to get anybody else into trouble."

"You needn't worry about me, Tom," said Sally. "I told him. Somebody sent me an 'nonimous letter and said that Tom's father left him a thousand pounds."

"Where's the letter?" asked Mr. Stubbs.

"I don't know. I had it in my room and it disappeared. Somebody must have stolen it."

"I took it and burned it up," said Mr. Stubbs.

"I bet the Devil knows all about that, Dad," said Johnnie.

The old man nodded: "And of course he knows that I have the money. I have had it for fourteen years. I put it in the bank and it has more than doubled; but I had a right to it. I was to have the use of it until you were twenty-one years old, and you are only nineteen now. But I'll give you a note and a mortgage, Tom, and I'll allow you two per cent interest on your money. I'd give you more, but, you know, trade has been dull."

"If I get the money my father left me, Uncle, I shall be satisfied."

"That's all right," said Mr. Stubbs, "but I want the Devil to be satisfied too."

The prospect of what seemed to him a great fortune in two years appeased all the angry feelings Tom had against Mr. Stubbs, so he thought

it his duty to encourage him: "I don't think the Devil will trouble you any more."

There was a dubious expression on Mr. Stubbs's face: "No, I ain't satisfied. That doll has got to go out of this house. Let the Devil have her and welcome."

"Where is she now?" asked Sally in her most innocent manner.

"She's in the spare room."

"What are you going to do about it, Dad?" asked Johnnie.

"I have decided. Johnnie, bring me the mallet."

It was a ponderous, wooden implement, with a long handle, and a head almost six inches in diameter. Mr. Stubbs started towards the spare room, mallet in hand.

"What are you going to do?" asked Sally.

Mr. Stubbs turned upon her fiercely: "Break her up! Disintegrate her! Pulverize her! Obliterate her from the face of the earth! Sweep her off this terrestrial globe."

Johnnie agreed with his father: "She must be swept."

"Now, I am going to do the right thing," said Mr. Stubbs. "I will send her back to her friends."

Mr. Stubbs unlocked the door and entered the spare room. He had not been gone long when there were sounds of terrific pounding. Above all could be heard a voice exclaiming: "Take that! Take that, you little Devil!"

"The game is up," said Tom. "When he finds out the truth, he will turn all of us outdoors. I think we had better follow his example and confess before the Devil gets us. I am going down to get Daisy and come back and make a clean breast of it. You two had better keep out of the way until he knows the whole truth."

"I think so too," said Sally. "He knows I know."

"I'm agreed," said Johnnie. "I know too much myself."

When Mr. Stubbs returned to the room, mallet in hand, there was no one in sight. He called loudly for his son, and Tom, and Sally, but there was no response. Then he sank dejectedly into his armchair. He seemed dissatisfied. He went

out to the woodshed and got a large basket, which he took into the spare room, and was absent for some time. When he returned, the basket was full of the broken fragments which had once formed his great creation. He sat down, placed the basket before him, and soliloquized:

"No fond papa ever looked into the smiling face of his first born with more rapture than I did when I put the finishing touches to my great work of art. But all my plans have met with defeat. My beautiful doll, which cost me so much toil and trouble, is forever lost and gone to smash. That was my masterpiece. The Devil put a soul into it, but it was accursed from the moment he did it. If you wish to raise a child, I am convinced that you cannot improve on the old way. I was a fool to think that I could get the best of nature."

Then he grew reflective. He was naturally a shrewd man, but for a while his wits and been wool-gathering. He arose and brought his oaken staff down upon the floor with a heavy thud.

"There is some mystery here! I have not got all that belongs to me. There is nothing here

but the carcass. Where are all those fine clothes that I bought for the doll? Perhaps the Devil came and got them. No, that's nonsense. I wonder what it all means! I believe there's some human deviltry here as well as Devil deviltry, and I believe that scapegrace of a nephew of mine it at the bottom of it. If he has played any game on me, he will never get that money until he goes to court and makes me pay it, and I will spend the whole of it in fighting him before I'll let him get a farthing.

CHAPTER XXVI

DRIVEN FROM HOME

A SHORT distance from the little red mill was an old well. It was very deep—fully sixty feet from curb to bottom. It had run dry some years before, and Mr. Stubbs's first thought was that he would have it filled up. Then he reflected that if he dug a hole in order to get earth to fill the well, he would have another big hole that he would have to fill in in turn. So the old well was boarded over.

"The water may come back again some day," he said to Johnnie.

Taking the basket of *disjecta membra,* he made his way to the old well. He lifted the cover and emptied out the contents of the basket.

"There," said he, as he replaced the cover, "if the Devil wants what's left of her, he can go down and get her."

If the Devil himself had sprung up out of the well, he would not have been more surprised than he was to see what he did see when he returned to the house. There stood the Devil and the doll. His first thought was to turn and run, but he was quick-eyed and quick-witted, and there was something in the faces of both that struck him as familiar. He approached and surveyed each critically.

"Thomas Bright and Daisy Dane! My dress! What an old gudgeon I have been!" he heard steps behind him and turned quickly. There stood Sally and Johnnie. As if by one accord, the four knelt before him.

Mr. Stubbs shut his teeth firmly together. His face was purple; he frothed at the mouth; he looked mad, acted mad, and he was mad. He stammered out: "W-what—what does all this mean?"

"It was all a joke!" Tom could not have said any more to have saved his life.

"A joke!" cried Mr. Stubbs. "It's an outrage, a swindle, a conspiracy. I'll have you arrested for this, and you, too, Miss Dane. You're

a thief. You stole my dress." He turned to Sally: "Did you know about this?"

"I couldn't help it," she sniffled.

"And you, Johnnie?"

"Sally wouldn't let me tell."

"And so you think more of Sally than you do of me—your own father? I have just thrown what was left of the doll down the old well, and I have a good mind to send you all after her. But if I killed you all, my revenge would be satisfied too soon. As for you, Miss Dane, I'll have you arrested for theft, and you will go to jail. I'll give the rest of you just five minutes to get out of my house, and don't you ever darken my doors again."

By this time Tom had recovered a little of his courage: "I'll be around in two years to get my money."

"Well, you won't get it. I'll fight you as long as there's a farthing of it left. I'll burn up the mill. I'll go into bankruptcy. None of you will ever get a farthing from me. Now, get out of here quick, all of you."

It is said of many people that when they ap-

proach the supreme crisis of their lives, instead of doing something noble and dignified, their actions are inconsequential and often silly. Three of the culprits knew that they were driven from home; the other felt that her fate would be a prison cell. In spite of this impending doom, however, the influence of the day was upon them. They had not anticipated such an outburst of passion. They had thought he would be angry at first, and then look upon it as a good joke, as they did. They had come with peace in their hearts and good will to men to acknowledge their misdeeds, and had hoped for forgiveness. Their reception had taken from them all power of argument or entreaty. Mr. Stubbs pointed towards the door and they made their way thither. Not one could have told just what impelled him or her to say what they did, but before they made their exit, Daisy and Sally said: "Merry Christmas, Mr. Stubbs."

Tom added: "Merry Christmas, Uncle."

Johnnie, with tears in his eyes, blurted out: "Merry Christmas, Dad."

Then with one accord they cried out in unison: "Good-bye," and were gone.

CHAPTER XVII

OLD HOBBLEQUINN

Mr. John Bull Stubbs was mad from the top of his head to the toe of his boot. He had been tricked by that ne'er-do-well Tom, by that scullion Sally, and, worst of all, by his idolized son—his Johnnie. Strange to say, Daisy was not a subject for his maledictions. He identified her with the doll—his creation—and for that, and her, he had now the kindest feelings. If Daisy had really been his doll, endowed with life, he would have loved her as a daughter—and to find that he was the butt of a joke—it was too much for a high-blooded Englishman to bear with equanimity.

He threw himself into his arm-chair—then he remembered that he had not locked the door. When he saw the unwashed breakfast dishes, his rage was rekindled, not so much on account

of what had taken place, but the life in store for him.

Again seated in the arm-chair, his anger began to cool. He wished to keep angry, and he wondered why it was being gradually subdued. Then it occurred to him that his fire had gone out, and there was no wood. He brought some from the shed, and burned his fingers while lighting it. He remembered how many things Tom had done for him, for which he had given him no credit—and no pay. What was he to have for dinner, with no Sally to prepare the dishes that he liked? There was no one to talk to. He missed Johnnie, who was always amusing and entertaining, even if he was not an adept in book learning.

Had he done right in turning them out? Certainly he had. They had made fun of him—an old man. He recalled the story of Elijah and the bears—his experience was worse, for *he* had an ungrateful son.

The hours passed. What a Christmas! No fine dinner—for though he was close in money matters, there had always been a plenteous table

set—for himself and Johnnie. As has been seen, Sally and Tom looked out for themselves, but it would have been suicidal on their part to let Mr. Stubbs think they were satisfied. They had not suffered from hunger, and Tom's continual complaints were base subterfuges to avoid arousing suspicion.

There was a knock at the door. Mr. Stubbs yelled: "Come in," but no one appeared. Then he remembered the locked door. When he opened it, there stood Old Hobblequinn, the village constable, on crutches.

Mr. Quinn followed him into the best room, and they sat down before the fire.

"Merry Christmas, Mr. Stubbs."

"You look it. What have you been doing to yourself?"

"Only a sprained knee—but a physical pain is not so bad as a mental sorrow."

"Well, thank fortune, I've got neither," said Mr. Stubbs.

"Are you sure of that?" asked Mr. Quinn.

Mr. Stubbs's temper rose: "What do you mean? Who's been telling you tales?"

John Bull Stubbs, Jr.

"Not tales, but truth, I am told. The Squire has sent me here to find out, and I've left a sick bed to do my duty as a king's officer."

"What have you to do with me? I have broken no law of God or man."

Mr. Quinn took the offensive: "Is that so, Mr. Stubbs? Is it not an offence against the Almighty to turn your own flesh and blood out of doors on His own day? Answer me that in the name of the king."

"I'll answer you nought. This is my own house and I'll do as I please."

"No, you'll not, Mr. Stubbs, when you've threatened to burn it and when you owe money."

"I owe no man. I've paid all my bills."

"The Squire does not think so, and I serve this paper on you, and you must bring your body before the law to answer to one Thomas Bright for money due him."

"It isn't due yet."

"Then you have his money, and you did threaten to go into bankruptcy."

"And I will, if I choose."

"But no you won't, for this paper is an attach-

ment in the name of the king, and you'll neither buy nor sell, except with the consent of his law officer, the Squire."

"He's not of age, and the money is not due till then."

"You have your rights, Mr. Stubbs, as an English free man, but so has he. You promised to give a note, which you must do, with interest, and good security that it will be paid. That is all the law asks. Have you this young man's certificate of birth?"

Mr. Stubbs was crestfalletn. He knew he had been beaten. He could flout Tom and Sally, but not the law. He went to an old secretary and brought out an old yellowed paper.

"Read that, Mr. Quinn."

The constable put on his spectacles and perused the document. "You've made a great mistake, Mr. Stubbs. It is nineteen years since this paper was made out, but it says the boy was born twenty one years ago, lacking a month or so. You thought the date of the document was the boy's birthday," and Mr. Quinn laughed officially. "Mr. Stubbs, you're a good business

man, but the law has keen eyes. To-morrow, at ten of the hour, appear before the Squire, or the penalty be upon you. I'll take this certificate to the Squire."

Mr. Quinn raised himself upon his crutches and walked slowly to the door, followed by the old toymaker. As the constable stepped over the sill he turned: "Mr. Stubbs, remember the meaning of this day—peace on earth, good will to men."

"Mr. Stubbs went back to his arm-chair. He was hungry, but could not eat. He, John Bull Stubbs, haled before the Squire! Then he got his Bible and searched until he found and read over and over again *I Timothy*, sixth chapter, and tenth verse.

CHAPTER XXVIII

OLD PINCH

It was five o'clock on Christmas afternoon when Squire Coldfish mounted the steps of the most pretentious mansion in Middleton-on-Quick. His servant Josephus had espied him coming up the walk and opened the door with an obsequious bow. The Squire required politeness from his servants, but he paid for it with numerous "tips." He often said to Mrs. Coldfish that "the master of a house should not rule it by fear."

"Is Mrs. Coldfish at home?" asked the Squire.

Josephus pointed towards the library door.

The Squire entered the room and threw himself into an easy-chair: "I'm so glad to be at home with my—"

"I should think you would be," said his wife.

"Boddley, I haven't laid eyes on you since Christmas eve, nearly twenty-four hours ago."

There was a razor-edge to her voice, and the Squire prepared himself for some cutting remarks—by speaking in a softly-modulated undertone.

"My dear Eunice, the demands of my official position cannot be ignored—but you have a right to demand an explanation, and you shall have it."

Mrs. Coldfish's expression indicated that the explanation might require corroborative testimony.

"My dear Eunice—"

Mrs. Coldfish shrugged her shoulders to show that her sourness could not be affected by connubial sugar-plums.

The Squire proceeded: "When we parted—it seems an age—I was on my way to see poor Mr. Quinn. Doctor Bunch attended him professionally, and after cheering him up, I came home and prepared to retire. You were sleeping peacefully. At that moment, Josephus informed me that Mr. Eales had sent word that he was very

low and wished to make his will. Our relations have always been very pleasant, and I could not refuse an old friend's last request."

The Squire mopped his perspiring forehead and Mrs. Coldfish re-adjusted her lace cap.

"I found Mr. Pinch in one of his peculiar moods. He was not ready to make his will, but insisted on my remaining with him. I should have done so, but Josephus told the telegraph messenger from Dunmoor where I was, and I received the message. I went at once to Dunmoor, promising Mr. Pinch that I would return early this morning."

"Did you go to the Hussars Ball?" There was a tone in Mrs. Coldfish's voice which conveyed a warning that a falsehood might lead to a revelation. To her surprise, perhaps, the Squire replied:

"I had to go. I was obliged to see a person who was there."

"And that person was—?" There was a steel glint in the woman's eye.

The Squire, unabashed, said: "Mrs. Margaret Merrily."

"I thought so; and what was the very important business that caused you to seek her in a public place? Why not have waited and seen her at home? You have been there often."

Mrs. Coldfish could not deprive herself of the opportunity to show her knowledge of her husband's whereabouts on certain occasions—for village gossips are accurate and prompt messengers of both good and, presumably, evil news.

The Squire smiled blandly. His official dignity had served him well at many a trying moment.

"My dear Eunice"—another shrug by Mrs. Coldfish—"I am going to tell you a wonderful story—a most mysterious coincidence. Every house has its skeleton, every family, except yours, its black sheep. Mine is not an exception to the rule. I had a younger brother; a wild, rollicking boy named Hadley. He ran away to sea when but nineteen, and I have never heard from him until I received that wire."

"Is he coming here? He shan't live in this house." Mrs. Coldfish spoke decidedly.

"No, my dear, he has gone to his last home—he is dead."

"Is that the mystery? Such events are quite common in this world." Mrs. Coldfish felt relieved. She had feared that this scapegrace was to become an inmate of her peaceful home.

"No, the mystery is coming. It seems he married a young Scotch lassie named Margaret Merrily."

Mrs. Coldfish hoped inwardly that the Scotch lassie was no relation to that detestable Mrs. Merrily of Middleton-on-Quick.

"The lassie became Mrs. Hadley Coldfish—but in a few months her husband deserted her, and she had never heard from him until I told her of his death."

"Boddley!" cried Mrs. Coldfish, as she sprang to her feet. "Do you dare to tell me that Margaret Merrily was ever your brother's wife?"

"Just that," said the Squire, and he shut his jaws with a snap. "You ought to be pleased, for your friends will not trouble you with gossip about me in the future."

The Squire lay back in his chair. He did not

try to follow up his advantage. No good man will humiliate his wife unnecessarily.

Mrs. Coldfish did not belie her name. She was mute. The blow was so heavy that silence was the only anodyne. The Squire was as jolly as a fox hunter with the brush in hand.

"On my way back from Dunmoor, with my sister-in-law, I stopped at Mr. Pinch's and he was ready to make his will."

Mrs. Coldfish roused herself. *He* should not see that *she* took the "mystery" much to heart. "Who gets all his money?"

"I will tell you as soon as he is dead. Doctor Bunch said that he was tough and might last a day or two."

"You have accounted for part of your time. Where have you been since you left your sister-in-law?"

"Very busy, officially. On my way from Mr. Pinch's, I met young Stubbs, his cousin Tom, Sally, the servant, and Miss Dane. There has been a rumpus at Stubbs's and he turned them all out of doors, excepting Miss Dane, of course. They had a long story to tell, and then I had

to see Mr. Quinn and make out a summons for Mr. Stubbs to appear before me to-morrow morning."

"Where did the children go?" asked Mrs. Coldfish. She had a motherly side to her. There were two little Coldfishes in the village churchyard. Perhaps, if they had lived, her husband would not have received so much of her attention. But it is only really wicked husbands who take advantage of such a situation.

"That took some time to decide," said the Squire. "At last Miss Dane took Sally home with her, but I had to go and explain matters to old Mr. Larkin and his wife. I put the boys in charge of Mr. Quinn, telling him to hold them as witnesses. And now, my dear, I am very tired, and very hungry, and I'd like my supper."

The next morning at half-past ten, Squire Coldfish sat in his magisterial chair. Mr. Quinn's injury could not have been as great as he, at first feared, or Dr. Bunch's skill had performed wonders, for the constable had discarded his crutches and limped in, supported by a heavy cane. He was followed by Mr. Stubbs, Johnnie,

Sally, Tom, and Daisy. The last mentioned young lady insisted upon coming to see justice done to Tom.

"Mr. Stubbs," said the Squire, "I understand that you acknowledge you owe Thomas Bright one thousand pounds to be repaid when he is of age. Mr. Constable Quinn has placed a document in my hands which shows that he will reach his majority in less than two months."

"I've offered him two per cent interest, and I never go back on my word."

The Squire nodded his approval: "How much money did you have in your business, Mr. Stubbs, when you added Mr. Bright's thousand pounds to your capital?"

Mr. Stubbs did some mental arithmetic: "At least two thousand pounds, your Honor."

The Squire nodded again: "I hardly think Mr. Bright is obliged to accept your offer of two per cent interest. If he will carry his case before the courts, I think they will allow him a third interest in the profits. That would be my decision. You can accept it, Mr. Stubbs, or carry the case before a higher court."

What Mr. Stubbs intended to say will never be known. While he was cogitating, Josephus entered and whispered in the Squire's ear, retiring noiselessly.

"How opportune!" said the Squire, and his small audience looked at him inquiringly. "I have just heard something, ladies and gentlemen, which will fill your hearts with sorrow—Old Mr. Pinch—I mean Mr. Eales—is dead."

Johnnie looked at Sally. He laughed aloud, while she stuffed her handkerchief into her mouth—but not to choke her sobs. Tom and Daisy smiled—they could not help it. Cry because Old Pinch was dead—that grouty old miser? Why, there wasn't a dog in Middleton-on-Quick that wouldn't wag his tail when he heard the news. Mr. Stubbs was wondering if people would laugh when he died—when the Squire spoke:

"Mr. Pinch's death so intimately concerns a person present here, that I feel it my duty to disclose some important information in my possession. Mr. Pinch left a fortune of at least ten thousand pounds to his only living relative—

a niece—his only sister's child. That child's name is Drummond—Dorothy Drummond."

Looks of astonishment were on the faces of his listeners. Who was Dorothy Drummond, and what did it matter to anyone there who she was?

"Before Mr. Pinch died, he told me a strange story. Many years ago his sister sent for him. She was on her death-bed. She had a little daughter whom she confided to his care. He allowed his sister to be buried by the Poor Law Guardians, and escaped caring for his own niece by leaving her on the doorsteps of our good citizen, Mr. Stubbs."

Sally gave a scream and seemed on the verge of hysterics. Johnnie took her in his arms and quieted her. Tom and Daisy congratulated her on her good fortune.

"I am glad," said the Squire, "that Mr. Pinch has atoned, in some degree, for his lack of family responsibility. Mr. Stubbs, have you decided to carry your case up higher?"

"Under the circumstances, your Honor, I

think I'll do full justice while I live, instead of leaving a will to do it for me."

Impulsive, innocent Daisy went to the old man, put her arms about his neck and kissed him. When she turned away, both had tears in their eyes.

"Please your Honor," said Sally, "what's my real name?"

"Dorothy Drummond. Your mother's maiden name was Dorothy Pinch—I mean Eales."

"You won't have that name long," cried Johnnie. "I don't like it. You've always been Sally Smiles, and, with Dad's permission, we'll soon turn it into Sally Stubbs."

CHAPTER XXIX

THE STUFFED BEAR

Ralph Crowders, Lord Dunmoor, was really an unhappy man. In the first place, he was an old bachelor, and such a man leads only half a life. No man, however, resourceful, ever was all he could be without the company, advice, and sympathy of a good woman. At first she might not be his wife, but when he found her to be indispensable, then he would insist upon the knot being tied. If the reader doubts this, let him or her read the biographies of the great men of the country. In the second place, Lord Dunmoor had too much money, and he did not know what to do with it. When a man earns money, he appreciates its value, and looks to get its full value when he spends it. If it comes to him unearned, and, in the case of Lord Dunmoor, unsought, he is apt to become either a spendthrift or a miser. By no possibility could Lord Dun-

moor become a spendthrift, nor had he the saving propensities of a miser, but as he did not know how to spend his money, and therefore hoarded it, he became an involuntary miser.

Lord Dunmoor was not social in his nature. The Castle was large and finely furnished in the old-fashioned style. The conservatory was not full of flowers, but a little of his money would have put them there. The gentry of the neighborhood would have been pleased if they had received invitations to social functions at the Castle. If the Lord had had a wife, the Castle would have been rejuvenated, revivified, and, in time, would have been filled with the laughter of children.

There was a large library at Dunmoor Castle. The previous Lord had been a bibliophile. He had not filled his library by sending to London for so many feet of books, but each volume had been carefully selected. It was particularly rich in works of travel, and, as the present Lord had spent the greater part of his life as a wanderer in strange lands, this part of the library was its great, in fact its only attraction for him. And

yet the reading of these books was not an unalloyed pleasure, for many a time he had thrown a volume upon the floor declaring that "the whole thing was a lie, because he had been there and had seen for himself and knew that it was not so."

It is not true that he was without friends. He had made the acquaintance of Captain Sabreton, who had become his best friend. The Captain, in turn, had introduced him to several members of his mess, and they had been welcome guests at the Castle at long intervals. Captain Sabreton, however, was privileged to visit Lord Dunmoor at any time and, as a rule, availed himself of this privilege at least twice a week.

Christmas day was a long and tedious one to Lord Dunmoor. There were no little stockings hanging under the mantlepiece. He had not felt called upon to patronize the shops in Dunmoor and buy presents for his servants. No, it was much easier to put money in envelopes and give them to Rooth, his butler, to distribute. When he awoke in the morning, there had been no cheerful salutation of "Merry Christmas,"

and there was no occasion for his lips to so shape themselves as to utter the words. He read some and then walked out upon the terrace; but the air was chilly, and he soon returned to the library with its cheerful fire. Impelled by a curiosity which he could not have explained, he went upstairs and entered the room in which the previous Lord Dunmoor had died. In one corner stood an old-fashioned desk. With no particular object in view, he opened drawer after drawer and looked the contents over. In one he found a large key, to wthch a card was attached. On the card was written a word which might have been read " Beer " or " Bear."

" Now, what door can that fit? " he soliloquized. " Keys are not made except to fit locks." He took the key and visited every locked room in the Castle. Not more than a third of the rooms were in actual use, and those that were not in service had been locked up. The key would not fit any of them. Then he thought of the tower.

" I don't think there's a room up there, but I'll go and see."

A long, steep flight of stairs led up to the

tower. When he reached it, he saw from its shape that there could be no large room leading from it; but there was a door, and the old key fitted the lock. It was very hard to turn the key, but he was at last successful. The door grated on its rusted hinges as he pulled it open. There was no room, but a closet the back of which conformed to the circular shape of the tower. There was nothing in the closet but a stuffed bear! He knew that it could not be alive, for the closet must have been locked for months, and if it had been, it would have suffocated long ago. It was an example of the taxidermist's art. He determined to take it to his room and examine it more carefully, so he removed it from the closet and closed and locked the door. Then he reflected that it would be dangerous to take the bear, which stood four feet high, in his arms and go down the steep stairs. He did not propose to risk a fall, so he went to his room, called the butler, and sent him for a coil of rope. The astonished servant soon returned with it, probably speculating that his master contemplated suicide.

Lord Dunmoor returned to the tower, tied the rope about the bear, and lowered it down to the foot of the stairs. In a short time he had it in his room. He locked the door so that he could contemplate his new acquisition at his leisure. He was soon disturbed, however, by a knock, and Rooth presented Captain Sabreton's card. Lord Dunmoor concealed the bear behind a flowing portière.

"Ah, Captain, glad to see you."

When Lord Dunmoor said this, he was truly glad; at the same time, there was a slight feeling of disappointment that he was not able to continue his examination of the bear.

"Sorry you didn't come to the ball last evening, my lord. We had a splendid time. The most successful affair with which our garrison has ever been connected. The beauty, and the brains, and the wealth of the county were present, with one notable exception," and he bowed low.

"Ah, thank you, Captain. I did intend to go, but I became interested in a book of travels in Egypt, and as it told about ground which I have been over many times, I will be honest and ac-

knowledge that I forgot all about you until it was too late to dress. I presume your lady love was there?"

"No; I wished her to go, but I could not induce her to do so. There are reasons, of course, which you and I understand—"

"Pardon me, Captain, for what I am going to say. You know I am your friend."

"You have always shown yourself to be so, my lord."

"I hope I may some day prove to be a better one than I have yet been. But I am going to ask you a question, and I know you will not be offended. I have no doubt that if you were financially able to do so that you would marry her. Is it not so?"

The Captain nodded.

Lord Dunmoor continued: "You know *what* she is, and I agree with you that she is a most attractive, lovable woman; but do you think it is advisable— do you think it is safe—to marry her until you know *who* she is?"

"I shall answer you," said Captain Sabreton, "as the lover does in the melodrama: I do not

care what her name is, or from where she sprang; I love the woman, and it is the woman whom I would make my wife."

"My dear Captain, you are beyond the reach of argument, and I will not indulge in expostulation. Now, I have something interesting to show you. I have been making a search through the old rooms of the Castle and I have made a find. What do you think of that?" As he spoke he threw aside the portière and disclosed the stuffed bear.

"Ah!" said the Captain. "Quite a large beast. Probably one you shot during your travels, and you had it stuffed and brought it home as a memento of an exciting occasion."

"That is a natural inference," said Lord Dunmoor, "but it is not the fact. I found an old key in my cousin's desk and I hunted all over the Castle until I found a door that it would fit. The door belonged to a closet, and in that closet I found Mr. Bruin. Since my discovery, I have been ransacking my brain to know why my cousin, the late Lord, should have locked that bear up in that closet, and yet it occurs to me

that my butler, Old Rooth, once told me that when Lord Dunmoor was on his deathbed he celled for beer. He had always been partial to that beverage, and a glass of the best brew was brought to him. Instead of drinking it, he pushed it away, and the contents of the glass were thrown all over the bed. He seemed to be angry that his wish had not been understood, but a moment later he fell back in a swoon, from which he never recovered, and died a short time afterwards."

Military men are obliged to be acute. They are forced to take advantage of circumstances and to decide quickly. There was no previous mental evolution on the part of Captain Sabreton, but as soon as Lord Dunmoor had finished, he remarked quickly: "Perhaps he said 'bear.' Was there a will?"

"His solicitor, Mr. Allardyce, said there was one, he understood, but he did not draw it up. However, it was never found."

"Well," said the Captain, with a laugh, "you have often told me that you read nothing but works of travel. Now, I read nothing but works

of fiction, and in many of them I find an eccentric old fellow, usually a duke or an earl, who makes out a will and hides it. This is only a guess on my part, but perhaps Lord Dunmoor's will is inside of that bear."

"By George!" cried Lord Dunmoor. "You're right! At any rate we can soon find out. I must get a knife."

"Will this do?" asked Captain Sabreton, and he drew from inside of his blouse a short, sharp-pointed dagger. "I always carry this with me, my lord, when I wear my undress uniform, for some of the boys have got into trouble nights when they were going home late, and it is well to have some weapon of defence. I do not believe in carrying a pistol, for one is too prone to use it at the slightest provocation. The sight of a knife, however, will often repel an attack without loss of life or injury on either side."

It took but a few moments to cut away the stitches, for the thread was old and virtually rotten. Their search was rewarded by the discovery of two documents, one of which was the will of the late Lord Dunmoor, and the other

some closely written sheets, tied with a faded blue ribbon, and endorsed in the old Lord's handwriting "An Event in my Life."

"Read this one first, my dear Captain," said Lord Dunmoor, as he threw himself into an easy-chair and lighted a cigar. "If you can smoke and read at the same time, help yourself," and he pushed the box towards him. "We will read the 'Event' before we read the will."

Lord Dunmoor's story may be told briefly, although he had taken many pages. He had made a mesalliance. He had fallen in love with the daughter of an inn-keeper, whose hostelry was a few miles from Dunmoor Castle. She was a very pretty, uneducated, English country girl. He did not dare to brave public opinion, and so he induced the girl to elope with him, and they went to France. Her name was Ruth Dunn. While in France he had gone by the name of Herbert Moore. Soon after the birth of his daughter Ruth, his wife sickened and died. He placed the little girl in the charge of an English family, but without disclosing her identity, and made provision for her early education. He had

returned to England at the death of his father, assumed the title, and took up his residence in the Castle. Whether he had ever contemplated sending for his daughter, the document did not say.

"I am not surprised," said Lord Dunmoor, when Captain Sabreton had finished reading. "I came here to see him a few years before his death and he seemed to be a very unhappy man." He sighed. "I think it runs in the family. Now, Captain, let us hear what the will says. But before you read it, let me say that I hope he has given away the greater part of his money. I would rather face a lion in the desert with but one shot in my rifle, than be tied to this Castle for life and have the charge of so much money. To whom can I leave it? I shall not marry, and I know of no near relative. Perhaps some day the whole estate will go into chancery and finally escheat to the crown. Perhaps it is just as well. But go on, Captain; read the will."

Its provisions were simple. One hundred pounds to his faithful butler, Peter Rooth, and many smaller bequests to other faithful servants.

Five hundred pounds to his solicitor, Mr. Simon Allardyce, and a like sum to his tailor, Mr. Tobias Whackers.

"This is getting interesting," said Lord Dunmoor with a laugh. "But I think he is rather parsimonious. He should have made them larger."

The Captain hesitated.

"Go on, Captain. You have not come to the end, have you?"

The Captain's face was flushed and his lips trembled.

"Go on!" cried Lord Dunmoor. "I hope he didn't forget his daughter."

"No," said the Captain, with an effort, "the next item is: 'Fifty thousand pounds to be given outright to my daughter Ruth. The balance of my estate, both real and personal, to my cousin, Ralph Crowders, who is next in line and will succeed to the title.'"

Lord Dunmoor sprang to his feet. "My dear Captain, his daughter shall have the money. I wish he had given her more. I am a rover by inclination and habit. I love to travel. I have

never been happy since I came to live in this Castle. I have always felt as though it was a prison. But now I see a chance to free myself, and you are the cause of my delivery."

"I don't quite understand," stammered the Captain.

"I will make it plain to you," said Lord Dunmoor. "My advice is, as a friend, do just as I tell you. Sell out your captaincy at once, marry Ruth, come and take charge of this old Castle for me, have your friends come, and instead of the gloom which has surrounded it for so many years, fill it with laughter and the sound of merry voices. As soon as you are married, I shall pack my traveling-bag and hie me forth to the pleasures of old. I may never come back, but before I go I shall arrange it that in case I do not return, all I leave behind me shall be hers and yours. Horatio, for the first time since I came to the Castle, I am a satisfied man, but when I get to Africa I shall be more—I shall be a happy man."

CHAPTER XXX

JOHN B. STUBBS, SON, & CO.

AFTER being driven from home, Sally was welcomed by Grandpa and Grandma Larkin, for Daisy's wishes were law to them. Tom and Johnnie found a good friend in Mr. Quinn, for, to their credit be it said, they had never been among his tormentors.

Mr. Stubbs returned from Squire Coldfish's improvised court in a subdued frame of mind. What a change had taken place in a single day! He had regarded himself as one of the leading citizens in Middleton-on-Quick, but his foolish experience had led to an outburst of passion by which he had lowered himself in the estimation of all. He had driven his own flesh and blood from his door—and why? Because he himself had failed to carry out a cherished but, as he saw now, a foolish, impossible scheme. They had

been made to suffer, not for their own fault, but for his. How should he redeem himself, and regain his old footing? His conscience spoke loud and clear—*Do the Right!* But what was "the right?" Tom must have his money and the profits due him. The Squire had settled that, for he would not appeal from his decision. That affair was settled. Sally was an heiress—no longer his scullion. He was ashamed that he had called Mr. Eales's niece by such a name—but he had not known her origin. She had been a nameless waif when she came to him—conscience said she was poor and friendless, and you should have tried to uplift her instead of crowding her down. He felt that he had been a wicked old man, but he would make amends.

"Come, Johnnie, we have a visit to make."

His son followed him without a word of questioning. His father's disgrace had silenced his tongue and quenched his usual flow of unconscious, and therefore, natural humor.

Mr. Stubbs knocked at Grandpa Larkin's door. Toby's resonant bark drew both Daisy and Sally to the door. They were both astonished when

they recognized their visitors, but they were welcomed cordially by all, not excepting Tom, who was too elated by his good fortune to bear enmity against the one from whom it came.

"I am a man of few words," said Mr. Stubbs. "The law has righted one wrong, and death the other. I have thought it all over. Tom loves Daisy and he has my consent, if he thinks he needs it, to marry her. My son Johnnie loves Sally, and I will welcome her as a daughter. No thanks to me, after all, for this, for you could all do as you pleased without my consent. But one thing I can do, and will. On New Year's day I will take Johnnie and Tom into partnership with me, and the proprietors of the little red mill will be—

JOHN B. STUBBS, SON, & COMPANY."

Our story is nearly told. Of course, Captain Sabreton sold his commission, married the little milliner, filled the old Castle with guests and gayety, while Boots drove the peacocks from the terrace and made it his own preserve.

Mr. Toby Whackers caught the matrimonial fever, and Miss Jennie Jamieson Jones became Mrs. Whackers.

"What am I, Toby?" she asked, as they entered their home after the ceremony, and he answered:

"You are my little goose!"

Mr. Quinn's accident unfitted him for his duties as constable, and he resigned his position to become Dr. Bunch's right-hand man, his principal duty being to compound drugs to cure the small boys who had troubled him so in the past.

Mrs. Hadley Coldfish, formerly Mrs. Margaret Merrily, put on widow's weeds. She removed Mrs. Squire Coldfish's fears of an unwelcome intrusion by buying Mrs. Sabreton's millinery shop and carrying it on with her dressmaking establishment, at the same time announcing to her patrons that her shop and her residence would continue to be in the same building. Mrs. Squire Coldfish, though re-assured, remained frigid until her husband's sister-in-law, as she had always called her to her associates, suggested that she had a beautiful dress and a lovely bon-

net from London that would exactly suit a Squire's wife. It was not a simple victory—it was a conquest, and after Mrs. Squire Coldfish had caused every neck in the village church to turn and behold her new finery, she told Mrs. Brythe-Wardner, her most intimate friend, that "Sister Margaret was a perfect jewel."

If we could look into two homes in Middleton-on-Quick, we should find Mrs. Thomas Bright and Mrs. John B. Stubbs, Jr., engaged in housekeeping duties. Mr. Bright and Mr. Stubbs, Jr., would be discovered packing boxes of toys for the London market, or making entries of sales. By the fire in the "best room" we should see Mr. Stubbs, Sr., in his easy-chair, placidly smoking his pipe and listening, with a smile on his rugged old face, to the voices of the toymakers singing at their work.

THE END.

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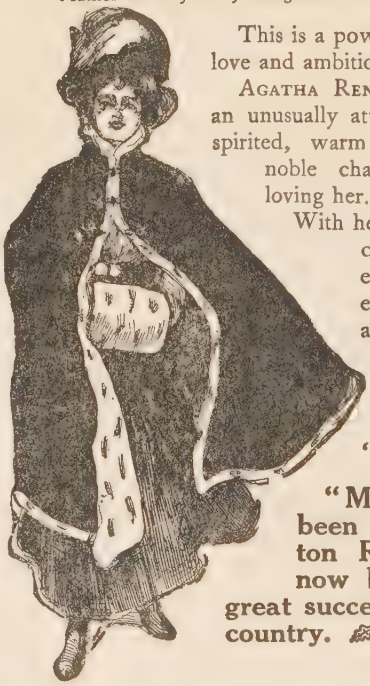

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